

Hafa Adai!

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75¢

2 allegedly ran 'ice' labs

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents and CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force and Customs officers have busted an ex-convict and a security guard who allegedly ran a clandestine methamphetamine or "ice" laboratory in a hotel room and at a Dandan home.

Vincent David Cabrera Jr., also known as Bong, and Eugene Blas Repeki, also known as Uncle, were charged in federal court with conspiracy

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Kilili unsure of April deadline to pass S.2325

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) game plan is to push the U.S. Senate version of his bill for passage to extend the transition period of the CNMI, effectively

extending the CNMI-Only Transitional Worker program beyond 2019 as well.

Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* last week that the game plan is to push U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski's (R-AK) S. 2325 through Congress.

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» **Working group reviewing testimonies**

CCC: We responded to *Bloomberg* writer

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Casino Commission did respond to a magazine's request for comments, but it now says its comments were not included in the published story.

According to Edward Deleon Guerrero, commission ex-

ecutive director, the commission responded "right away" to *Bloomberg Businessweek's* request for comments on points noted in their Feb. 15, 2018, article, "A Chinese Casino Has Conquered a Piece of America."

Deleon Guerrero provided *Saipan Tribune* with a copy

See CCC on Page 4



COMMITTED TO JAPAN

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Lt. Gov. Victor B. Hocog, and the Marianas Visitors Authority management and board of directors meet with about 20 stakeholders of the CNMI's Japan market at the conference room of the Office of the Governor on Monday to assure them of the administration's commitment to the Japan market.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IPI lawyer to push extension

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
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REPORTER

An Imperial Pacific International

(CNMI) LLC lawyer told the Commonwealth Casino Commission last week that he is planning to propose an extension on the scheduled dead-

line of the Imperial Pacific Resort completion.

IPI general counsel Philip J. Tydingco told commissioners last Thursday that he would be recommending that the Aug. 31, 2018, deadline for

the completion of the casino-resort be extended.

Commission executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero earlier reminded IPI executives that failure to come up with 329 rooms by the

deadline would mean they would be in violation of the casino license agreement.

"I am fully aware of the obligations that we have, and that is why..."

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INSIDE



BUSINESS

Samsung unveils new smartphones with unchanged designs and small improvements.

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NATION

Students at a Florida high school where 17 were killed return to school.

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LIFE & STYLE

"Black Panther" scores one of the best second weekends ever.

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Local

More CNMI students concerned about gun violence

By BEA CABRERA
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REPORTER

The mass shooting by a student at a Florida high school that killed 17 people is prompting concerns among CNMI students in both public and private schools about how safe they are from gun violence.

According to Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, his office has been approached by stu-

dents and parents about student safety.

"A few parents have approached school officials, and we gave them assurances that we have many policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of our students and employees," he said.

"A few students have approached us as well and our school counselors have met with them to ease their anxieties," he added.

Acting Education commissioner Yvonne "Boni" R. Pangelinan has also received reports of students approaching teachers and counselors for assurances.

"Children have the right to be afraid, especially with incidents like the Florida mass shooting. We have done drills in the past and more drills will be done to get the children equipped, both in natural disaster drills and man-made vio-

lence drills," she said. "Schools have begun that process even before the Florida incident and we have been working to address their concerns."

The mass shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, left 17 dead. The suspected shooter, 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, used to attend at the same school and had access to high-powered ammunition.

Aside from a Crisis Re-

sponse Team that is activated in any emergency, Deleon Guerrero said that MCS has policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of students and employees.

"We have strict policies about outside guests, who must sign in at the main office and obtain a visitor's pass. Any unauthorized visitors are escorted off campus and, if necessary, referred to law enforcement," he said.

"In addition, we have 24-hour security services, a video surveillance system, and employees that provide additional supervision throughout the day. We also hold a number of emergency drills, including evacuation drills and active shooter drills throughout the year, all of which utilize coded announcements so as to avoid causing panic among students and to avoid alerting intruders to our drills," he added.

The CNMI used to prohibit the possession and importation of handguns and ammunitions. U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona later declared the CNMI Weapons Control Act unconstitutional.

In response, the CNMI passed Public Law 19-42, also known as Special Act for Firearms Enforcement that regulates the possession of firearms in the CNMI and Public Law 19-73 in December of the same year that implements possession and management of firearms in the CNMI.

These laws aims to supplement and not contradict the U.S. Constitution.

"Children are right to be afraid. It is unfortunate that we have to talk to children about safe places like where to hide in the classroom and which areas to avoid," Pangelinan said.

"But this is the reality now... we did not have this man-made violence before. The duty to protect our students becomes even more significant these days," she added.

The duty to protect the students is the reason why Tanapag Middle School PTSA president A. Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong appealed the U.S. District Court's decision.

In a declaration he filed in court, he said he opposes the legalization of handguns in the CNMI because these weapons add new and dangerous threats to the student's welfare.

"A handgun in the house or school creates new opportunities for murder, assault, and suicide as well as attempts and threats to commit them, not to mention accidental deaths from a gunshot," he added.

Deleon Guerrero believes the responsibility to control guns in the CNMI rests with both the government and schools.

"Both should shoulder the responsibility... I am in favor of strict gun control laws because countries that have similar laws experience far less incidents of gun violence than countries without them... At the school level, student and employee safety should be the No. 1 priority," he said.

"As Maslow's hierarchy of needs teaches us, safety is the foundation for all learning and performance. Students who feel unsafe cannot and will not learn, and employees that feel unsafe cannot and will not perform well," he added.

Pangelinan said that both the CNMI government and private citizens should learn from these off-island events.

"Why can't we use that information and data to guide us to implement applicable laws and abide by them? Local lawmakers should use as example the violence we see in the mainland and work hard to protect our community, our children," Pangelinan said.

"Educating and nurturing our students and assuring them they are safe... is part of our lives now, with the hope that man-made violence would not ever make it to our school doors," Pangelinan added.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Free business seminar for veterans & spouses

The CNMI Military/Veteran's Affairs Office and the Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "Reboot to Business" at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Azucena Room on Monday, March 26, from 9am to 4pm, presented by Dennis Kwak, director, Veterans Business Outreach Center of the Pacific. To register, contact Velma Del Rosario at 664-2650 or visit <https://sbavets.force.com/s/>. (PR)

Free seminar on business plan

The CNMI Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "How to Write a Business Plan" at the Commonwealth Development Authority boardroom on Wednesday, March 7, 2018 from 8:30am to 10am. It will be presented by Nicole Babauta, director/business adviser, CNMI SBDC. To register, contact the CNMI SBDC office at 664-3018 or visit <http://pisbdcn.eccenterdirect.com/events>. (PR)

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OAG nixes motion to compel govt to produce police report, statements

The Office of the Attorney General opposes the Office of the Public Defender's motion to compel the government to produce the police report, witness statements, and any other physical evidence prior to the continuation of a preliminary hearing in the case against a man facing charges of stealing and forging checks.

Assistant attorney general Jonathan L. Wilberscheid said that, based on the absence of any constitutional right to discovery prior to a preliminary hearing, and because no Commonwealth rule or statute provides for such early discovery, and because of the limited nature of the preliminary hearing, the Superior Court should



Camacho

deny the OPD's motion to compel in the case against Nelson A. Saimon.

The due process clause does not include a right to avoid trial in the absence of probable cause, said Wilberscheid in the government's opposition to the motion filed Tuesday last week.

Wilberscheid said for over 100 years, the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently held that due process is not violated by subjecting a defendant to charges without a preliminary hearing.

The prosecutor said there is no basis in Commonwealth rule or statute to compel pre-preliminary hearing discovery.

He said the right to counsel at a preliminary hearing includes only a limited right of cross-examination based on finding probable cause.

The prosecutor said defendant has not explained how obtaining the discovery he seeks in this case will help determine probable cause, rather than simply shifting up the government's timetable to provide discovery in the ordinary course.

In Saimon's motion to compel, assistant public defender Heather M. Zona asked the court to order the government to provide the police records and information that a police detective had said he used to refresh

his recollection and/or familiarize himself with the case.

Zona said that materials used by any witness to re-

fresh his or her recollection must be provided to Saimon.

Failing to do so would constitute an interference with

Saimon's right to effective assistance of counsel and right to cross-examine witnesses, she said

Saimon was arrested last Jan. 27 on charges of theft and forgery. The preliminary hearing was held last Feb. 5.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho adjourned the hearing to allow the parties to brief the issue. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



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13 obtain land compensation payments

Thirteen claimants whose properties were acquired for right-of-ways for primary roads across the CNMI decades ago will be paid pursuant to Public Law 19-87.

Among these claimants, five were fully compensated and eight were partially paid.

Claimants partially paid were given 18 percent of the total owed to them, in an effort to maximize the number of claimants to be compensated.

Most claimants have waited over 20 years to receive full or partial payment and interest on their claims are costing tax-

payers much more in interest than the principal amounts.

The Department of Public Lands estimates that it would cost \$85 million to compensate all existing claims.

P.L. 19-87 appropriated \$3 million for the purpose of settling land compensation

claims for primary roads; however, this is not sufficient to settle all other pending claims.

Finance Secretary Larissa Larson assures that the funds appropriated by P.L. 19-87 are available for disbursement to claimants and payments will be processed as soon as the Department of Public Lands

and Attorney General Edward Manibusan certifies that documents for each claimant are complete and the appropriate payment amounts.

The last time payouts to claimants were made was on Aug. 22, 2013, when a total

of \$171,931.72 was paid to eight private land owners pursuant to Saipan Local Law 16-1, as amended.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

ICE

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to manufacture methamphetamine.

Repeki was charged separately with illegal possession of a controlled substance in Superior Court.

Cabrera and Repeki are expected to be taken before the U.S. District Court for the NMI today, Tuesday, for an initial court appearance hearing.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo imposed a \$50,000 cash bail on the 39-year-old Repeki.

Last Sunday, investigators searched Cabrera's room at Saipan Vegas Resort and Repeki's house in Dandan.

Upon entering the hotel room, investigators were allegedly immediately hit with an overwhelming smell of chemical odor and arrested Cabrera.

A DEA special agent clad

in personal protective wear, double gloves, and a respirator processed the hotel room, taking samples from a yellow powdery substance inside a water bottle, a clear liquid from plastic bottles and Styrofoam cup, and white powder from a plastic container. He also seized Sudogest pills and other drug paraphernalia.

During the search at Repeki's house, investigators also took samples of the same liquid and powders that were found in Cabrera's hotel room.

According to DEA special agent Kirk F. Johns, the investigation began last Oct. 15 when he was contacted by a pharmacy employee who tipped them about the purchasing patterns of some people of cold medicine containing pseudo-ephedrine.

That day, a man arrived at the pharmacy and bought two boxes of 30 pills each of Sudogest, a cold medicine.

Five minutes later, another man arrived at the pharmacy and bought a box of 30 pills of Sudogest.

Johns said he went over the pharmacy's list of buyers of medicine that contain pseudo-ephedrine and the logbooks showed that Cabrera, Repeki, and another person bought thousands of milligrams of active pseudo-ephedrine from July 3 to Oct. 15, 2017.

He said he then received a call from a tipster last Oct. 16 about people led by Cabrera cooking "ice" on Saipan by using the "shake and bake" method.

Johns said he and another officer met with the tipster who revealed that Cabrera usually cooks "ice" at his friend's house or in a trunk of a rental car.

The tipster then rode with investigators and pointed out the rear of a house where Cabrera usually cooks the "ice."

The tipster stated that the

"ice" being cooked is of good quality and is made using plastic 2-liter soda bottles.

The drug traffickers will commonly mix Cabrera's "ice" with other meth that "is Chinese and on the streets of Saipan."

Cabrera allegedly learned the "shake and bake" method of cooking "ice" while he was living in Guam.

Last Feb. 8, Department of Public Safety K-9 officer Rudolfo Hermosilla conducted a traffic stop on a car driven by Repeki for speeding on Middle Road in Chalan Laulau.

During the search, the officer seized two plastic baggies with powdery substance and numerous empty baggies and other items.

Repeki was later allowed to leave and drive to his worksite.

Last Feb. 24, investigators observed several persons entering and exiting Cabrera's room at Saipan Vegas Resort.

the first eight months of 2017.

In response, the commission said that they were aware of the transactions from the monthly vendor listing, which was a requirement of the commission.

"The CCC was informed that the services provided by the said law firm are for non-gaming legal matters. Further, the CCC's non-gaming vendor licensing requirements exempts attorneys providing legal services," the commission noted, adding that the Commonwealth Supreme Court regulates attorneys who practice law.

In a brief phone call with commissioner vice chair Joseph Reyes, he confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that the commission is still in talks whether to pursue legal actions against Bloomberg.

He said the commission has yet to "come out with a position" on the issue and has yet to meet to discuss their next move. The commission met last Thursday.

Commission chair Juan Sablan earlier flatly denied the allegations made in the article, which included corruption, money laundering, and several others against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the casino commission, and Imperial Pacific.

IPI is going to pursue legal actions against the magazine on the grounds of defamation.

and Tobacco Control Division and Registrar of Corporation, the Department of Health's Bureau of Environmental Health, the Department of Finance's Division of Revenue and Taxation, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., the Office of the Governor, and other government permitting and regulatory agencies and departments as well as IPI.

"The CCC met separately with the DPW Building Code personnel and with the IPI contracted structural engineers working on the hotel and casino project to discuss safety issues and building code requirements. The structural engineering inspectors assured the CCC that the rumors of unsafe conditions at the Imperial Pacific Resort were without merit and that the IPR building is structurally safe and sound," wrote the commission, adding that the same engineers further assured the commission that the building was being built "above and beyond standards."

"The CCC required IPI to secure all required licenses and permits...prior to allowing IPI to go live with its casino gaming operations, including securing the conditional building occupancy permit from DPW," the commission added.

The story pointed out that IPI has made several payments to the Torres Brothers law firm, which reportedly totaled to \$18,000 per month in seven of

miliar relationships of Deleon Guerrero and Torres by emphasizing that Deleon Guerrero was Torres' uncle, while Torres' former chief of staff and current executive adviser to the governor is Deleon Guerrero's son, Matt.

The commission clarified that while the relationships existed, the executive director was hired prior to Torres becoming governor.

"All of the current members of the commission are not appointees of Gov. Torres," clarified the commission.

The commissioners were appointed by late governor Eloy S. Inos. In late 2015, Inos passed away and then lieutenant governor Torres became governor.

The article said that, despite being opposed by the Development Plan Advisory Committee report submitted to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in May 2017, the casino still opened.

To this, the commission explained that they met with several government agencies, which included the Department of Public Works, the Commonwealth Zoning Office, the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce's Alcohol, Beverage,

CCC

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of their response to the magazine, which the commission claims clarifies several points in the story.

In response to the massive gambling operation on a per-table basis cited by Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, the commission pointed out that the numbers were true, despite questions raised by casino industry veterans.

"The [commission] has a full-time audit and compliance division that review the daily rolling transactions. The reported gaming activities, and more specifically, the 'rolling volume,' are true figures," the commission noted.

The commission noted that possible factors that contribute to the high numbers include IPI's history as a large junket operator in Macau.

"[IPI has] a very strong network in the VIP market. Due to strong ties to VIP patrons, the volume and the process of credit issuance have been quite large and patron-friendly. China's anti-corruption campaign has diversified VIP patrons to a new place around Asia-Pacific region such as Saipan, [while the] visa waiver program available for Chinese players has eased their trips into Saipan."

The article noted the fa-

KILILI

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This was in response to *Saipan Tribune* clarifying the legislative hearing date on Sablan's U.S. House version of the CW extension bill, H.R. 4869, which was introduced the same day as S. 2325.

"The working group is reviewing the testimonies and... the immediate goal as of this time is to get the [U.S.] Senate version of the bill passed and sent to the [U.S.] House for action as soon as possible," said Sablan, referring to the comments received by a bicameral bipartisan working group led by Murkowski on reviewing the CNMI transitional period extension.

He added that the public may still comment on the bill.

"...If it was my choice, this bill needs to get out and become law on April 1, 2018, but that's a little bit asking for too much, I think, but that's the idea. I don't know if we can make that happen," he said.

He added that since U.S. President Donald J. Trump took office in 2017, it has been tough to get immigration bills though.

In a Jan. 9, 2018, letter to U.S. Secretary of Homeland

Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen, Sablan requested that the CW cap for fiscal year 2019, which the upcoming renewal period starts on April 1, 2018, be rescinded.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced in November 2017 that the CW cap for fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2020 is at 4,999 and 2,999 respectively.

Sablan requested that, instead of a reducing the fiscal year 2018 CW cap of 12,998 to 4,999 for fiscal year 2019, Sablan suggested that the department set the CW cap for fiscal year 2019 at 12,997 and 12,996 for fiscal year 2020.

Sablan pointed out in his letter that the reprieve from the reductions would give "U.S. Congress time for thorough consideration of replacement legislation."

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres also asked for a reprieve but with no specific numbers.

The U.S. Senate legislative hearing for S. 2325 started last Feb. 6, 2018, with Torres, Sablan, Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), and members of the Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. as well as several of Torres' Cabinet members attending.

IPI

From Page 1

will be recommending an extension," said Tydingco.

He insists that his recommendation is not politically influenced but only "given what the engineers and the contractors say we can achieve in a safe engineering manner."

"[It] should be done in a safe engineering and construction manner, so that is sort of the guiding principal," said Tydingco.

The commission did not comment on the statement.

IPI was recently approved 1,542 H2-B visas, with the workers expected to arrive in early March, according to IPI's Eric Poon, reporting to the commission.

He added that the workers were sourced from the Philippines and Taiwan.

He said that IPI currently has about 216 workers as a result of their recent contract signing with Pacific Rim Constructors in Guam and includes the project management team and engineers from the construction firm.

A progress report from IPI

submitted to the commission noted that work on the casino resort went down to sluggish rates after IPI's prime contractor, MCC International, left the island after it was learned that they used illegal workers.

"We are working...to bring the [workers] on board as soon as possible. Hopefully the first batch [will arrive] at the beginning of March 2018," Poon noted.

Poon's report did not specify how many H2-B visas IPI applied for and how many were denied. He noted that visas would all be used for the construction of the casino resort.

"I just want to move forward... [of course,] doing it right and emphasi[zing] safety," said Joseph Reyes, commission vice chair. "Let's prove the [detractors] wrong."

Poon responded, "...We want to show the whole... world that we have an amazing project and we are going to have a 5-6 star hotel on Saipan."

Poon added that IPI is currently in talks to add more shifts in a day to complete the construction by the deadline of August 2018.

Support for shortening tourists' stay is scrapped

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**

erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Support to encourage Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to shorten the length of stay for tourists was scrapped last Wednesday.

Rep. Ivan A. Blanco's (R-Saipan) House Resolution 20-09 failed to garner enough support at the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs led by chair Rep. Gregorio M. Sablan Jr. (R-Sablan).

The intention of the resolution was to encourage the government to shorten the stay period of tourist from countries under the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program from a maximum of 45 days to a maximum of 15 days.

Sablan noted in a previous committee meeting that the reasoning behind shortening the length of stay of tourists is to prevent birth tourism and stop overstaying tourists.

"The committee voted against introducing it in the House," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* in a previous interview. He added that the issue is out of the CNMI Legislature's control.

"[To] lessen the number of days [for the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program], it requires an act of the U.S. Congress. We have no jurisdiction on that," he said, adding that he also wishes not to disrupt the program as it would also affect Guam's tourism industry.

Countries in the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program include Australia, Brunei, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom, including tourist target markets Japan and Korea.

The Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands all opposed H.R. 20-09.

MVA stated in their comments that H.R. 20-09's intent was unclear.

"The resolution seeks to reduce the period of authorized stay for the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program in order to deter individuals who enter the CNMI as tourists from 'violating their visa parole, overstaying and working illegally.' However, decreasing the stay period for the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program will have no effect on the parole program since visitors from China and Russia enter the CNMI via parole, precisely because they are not on the list of the visa waiver program countries," MVA pointed out.

According to the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the resolution sets additional limitations for tourists, which may lessen the island's appeal and cause "tourism industry distress."

HANMI also opposed the resolution.

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Muña wants to cultivate local workforce at hospital

By **BEA CABRERA**
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REPORTER

Speaking to Current Issues students at the Northern Marianas College earlier this month, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Esther Muña encouraged them to pursue careers in healthcare to build up the hospital's workforce.

"There is a job for everyone at CHCC...such as healthcare finance if you like numbers. If

you like medical records and understanding concepts, medical coding is a good job," she added.

Muña said that, as a member of the State Development Board, they often discuss how to encourage more students to get into the medical field.

"I often tell the students that you don't have to be a nurse or a doctor to pursue a career in healthcare as you can be anything you want be," she said.

Speaking from experience,

Muña said she started by getting a degree in accounting, became a medical transcriber, went into healthcare management, hospital administration, medical office manager, business office manager, chief finance officer, hospital administrator, chief operating officer, and finally, chief executive officer.

Right now, Muña is working on providing incentives for students who want to pursue nursing and eventually

hire them at CHCC.

"We are finding ways how we can provide incentives for students who are pursuing the course of nursing and we talked about incentives like [student] loan repayment and provide bonuses if you sign a contract with CHCC because giving incentives is a practice in the U.S.," she said.

"We love our [foreign workers] but the reality is we also have the young generation that are coming in who more edu-

cated now and are passionately pursuing degrees. I want to say is, if you have questions, visit us at CHCC and I'll be here to mentor you," she added.

Muña said the door at CHCC is always open to local hires.

"The law specifically says that if you are going to apply a nurse as H1-B...one requirement is that the applicant must have a bachelor's degree. The reason we opted against it is we are basically preserving the pipeline of NMC because,

if we are going to require that everyone has a bachelor's degree, then even the nurses from the Philippines that have bachelor's degrees can be processed as H1-Bs," she said.

"If we do that, it means we are blocking the college students that are coming from NMC. We don't want to do that as we want to preserve our pipeline, preserve local hires, and also take care of those who have been here for quite a long time," she added.

Saipan honors former mayor Rios

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office, in conjunction with the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, held a memorial service to honor the late Saipan mayor Jose Santos Rios last Friday.

Dignitaries from Saipan such as members of the Legislature and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres gathered to help Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang and the municipal council present a plaque of appreciation to the loved ones of Rios at the Kiosku in Chalan Kanoa.

According to Apatang, Rios was a very humble man who contributed much to the island's development.

"His contributions when he was mayor of Saipan supported and pushed all efforts back in the day to make our island and the Commonwealth a peaceful, safe, and healthy place to work, run a business, and raise a family," he said.

Apatang also said that Rios will be remembered for his legacy of working toward improvement and better living in the Commonwealth.

"He passed it on to his successors to use as a guide in turning the dream into reality," he said.

Rios was Saipan mayor from Jan. 8, 1982, to Jan. 7, 1986. He was the island's third mayor since the Northern Mariana Islands became a U.S. commonwealth.

Rios was born on Dec. 19,

1939, and passed away on Jan. 21, 2018.

Municipal council administrator Frances Muña said that Rios passed away a little over a month after celebrating his 78th birthday.

According to information obtained by the municipal council from Rios' family, Rios was given a military funeral at the veteran's cemetery in Washington state on Feb. 2, 2018.

Rios enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to South Korea during the Korean War. Rios later joined the U.S. Peace Corps and was stationed in Chuuk.

Rios is survived by his wife Emilia and children Roy Rios, Marie Martinez, Remay McNally, and Joseph Rios Jr.

Express Financial celebrates 5th year anniversary



KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Express Financial employees pose for a photo during their five-year anniversary last Thursday.

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Express Financial celebrated a milestone last Thursday by celebrating five years of service in the CNMI with a table of refreshments that included baked goods and an enormous cake for their loyal customers.

According to Albert Manly, Express Financial vice president for operations in Guam and Saipan, it was their way to give back to their loyal customers.

"They have been so good to us and what today is all about is showing the island that we appreciate all their support and we couldn't possibly be

as successful as we have been without them," he said.

Manly said that Express Financial has seen continuous growth in the last five years, thanks to their customers.

With growth came challenges. According to Express Financial area manager James Matsumoto, one of their biggest challenges was the issue with contract workers. Fortunately, they were able to adapt to the changes.

Manly said that foreign workers make up a third of their workforce so, if all goes well in favor of contract workers, Express Financial will continue to see growth in

greater value.

"We anticipate to continue what we are doing right now and, hopefully, if the laws are in favor of the contract workers, it'll be even better," he said.

Matsumoto said the highlight of the past five years was that the actual growth of Express Financial was greater than projected.

"We like to pride ourselves in being the friendliest and quickest place to get cash when needed and we will be there for them. We are always excited to see new customers," he said.

Express Financial is open from 8am to 4pm on weekdays. It is located on Middle Road.

Tinian and Agat now sister cities

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TINIAN—The island of Tinian and the village of Agat in Guam recently came to a sisterhood agreement that means a helping hand will always be extended to the island of Tinian if any help is needed and vice versa.

The first sister-city agreement between an island within the CNMI and a village in Guam was signed during the 14th Annual Hot Pepper Festival on Tachogna Beach, Tinian over week ago.

"It would be the first [agreement] of its kind, I believe, to join the CNMI and one of the villages in Guam...we've helped the folks throughout different areas such as the Philippines,

Japan, and in the U.S. but now we are focused on helping us, the Marianas," said Agat Mayor Kevin Susuico.

According to Susuico, the agreement is intended to assure Tinian that they can always count on the Municipality of Agat in times of need and to assure Agat that they can always count on the municipality of Tinian as well.

"For example, if there are kinds of events that are here (Tinian) or there are events on Guam where we can somehow help one another... or if god forbid there is a disaster here we can help one another, truly as one family," he said.


Susuico said that the agreement has been in the works for a while and he is excited, in behalf of Agat, for what the fruits of the sisterhood will be.

"We look forward to the growing relationship between Guam and Tinian and we look forward to many many years of sisterhood together," he said.


Tinian Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas said that he is extremely happy that the agreement was officiated and there are already plans in place to utilize the newly established bond.

According to San Nicolas there are already events coming up like the *Mes Man'amko*. It has already been arranged that the village of Agat will host and entertain them and Tinian plans to do the same for the Man'amko of Agat.

The village of Agat has also committed to sending 50 bags of rice down to Tinian for the *man'amko* in honor of the sisterhood agreement.



UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING



Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 3rd Quarter General Membership Meeting on March 1, 2018, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the LaoLao Bay & Golf Resort – Caladium Room

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Roll Call**
- III. **Review & Adoption of Agenda of March 1, 2018**
- IV. **Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2018**
- V. **Action Items**
 - a. Ratify/Approval of Partial Award of FY 2018 DD Basic Grant Budget
 - b. Ratify/Approval of Partial Award of FY 2018 AT Program Grant Budget
 - c. Ratify/Approval of CDD FY 2019 Local Budget
 - d. Ratify/Approval of FY 2018 CDD Work Plan
 - e. Ratify/Approval of FY 2019 CDD Work Plan
 - f. Ratify/Approval of FY 2020 CDD Work Plan
- VI. **Reports**
 - a. Chairperson
 - b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
 - c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
 - d. Executive Director
- VII. **Old Business**
 - a. CRSP Volunteer Respite Training
 - b. Developmental Disabilities & Employment Awareness Month
- VIII. **New Business**
 - a. Video Remote Interpreting and Remote Captioning
- IX. **Miscellaneous**
- X. **Next Meeting - May 2018**
- XI. **Adjournment**

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ **Efren Nicholas**
Chairperson

This ad was paid for by funds from the DD Basic Grant Part A (Administrative)

Compassionate Friends bids farewell

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan will be closing down in the CNMI, but will be morphing into the "We Remember Them CNMI," still with the same goal of offering support for grieving families here.

In a press release sent by the organization's founders—Jill Derickson, Donna Krum, and Maggie George—it said the steering committee of The Compassionate Friends of Saipan met for their annual meeting last Feb. 24 to discuss whether or not the organization should or should not be kept running.

"Sadly, very sadly, we've come to the conclusion that

the organization should not continue and we have decided to close The Compassionate Friends of Saipan," stated the press release.

The steering committee, however, feels that there is value in continuing support for those in the community who have lost children, siblings and grandchildren and there has also been great interest in the organization's annual candlelighting event.

"We want to continue to offer support, and will be using the name 'We Remember Them CNMI,'" it said.

The focus will now be directed toward grieving families across the CNMI.

As a first step, Krum and George are organizing a

brunch, in conjunction with International Bereaved Mother's Day. July is Bereaved Parents Awareness Month, and planning has begun for a Walk to Remember. The event is for mothers to remember and celebrate their motherhood and the children they have lost.

According to the press release, if assistance is found, the new group (We Remember Them CNMI) hopes to continue the candlelighting tradition, in conjunction with The Compassionate Friends' annual event. The group aims to start planning in August.

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan is a worldwide organization that was extended to Saipan over seven years ago to provide hope,

comfort, and understanding to grieving families who have lost a loved one.

In related news, the statement said that Tania Mendiola from Tinian has started a

Facebook support page called "Our Children in Heaven" that offers support for parents and siblings who have lost their loved ones.

For additional informa-

tion, contact Derickson at 989-9821 or email her at jilld@pticom.com), Krum at 783-1900 or email her at donnakrum@gmail.com, or George at 989-6825.

Alleged burglar an employee of mayor's office

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A \$15,000 cash bail was imposed Friday on an employee of the Saipan Mayor's Office's Dog Control Program who was allegedly caught on a surveillance camera stealing items from a car at Banzai Cliff last Monday, Feb. 19.

Rodney Camacho Babauta, 35, was arrested for burglary and theft.

The Office of the Public Defender was appointed as his counsel. Preliminary hearing will be on March 1 at 1:30pm.

Police said that Babauta admitted in an interview last Wednesday that he was the person in the camera.

Police said the victim, a tour guide, stole an estimated \$3,000 worth of items, includ-

ing a Marc Jacob bag, a Fendi pouch, a Gucci wallet, a Samsung Galaxy Tablet A, and other items.



Babauta

Police said that Babauta admitted waiting for a while and saw a van parking. He said he noticed the lights in the vehicle were still turned on and that a child was sleeping in the back seat.

Babauta said he opened the passenger door and took the bag.

Police said that last Monday, Feb. 19, at 10:10pm, the Department of Public Safety received a call about a theft from a vehicle at Banzai Cliff.

The victim is a local tour

guide, who stated that her purse was stolen from her vehicle between 8pm and 8:30pm. At that time, the tour guide escorted passengers on a 20- to 30-minute tour of the cliff, while her purse and a sleeping child were left in the car.

The driver did not notice the purse was missing until she returned her group to Pacific Islands Club Saipan later that evening. She then reviewed the vehicle's surveillance camera, confirmed the purse was stolen, and called police.

The video, circulated on social media, prompted several tips to the Crime Stoppers hotline. As a result of those tips, police brought Babauta in for questioning last Thursday morning.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SHEFA deadline

The deadline to submit supporting documents for Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance applications is on Feb. 28, 2018. All documents must be complete before submission. Office hours is from 7:30am to 4:30pm. (PR)

VA benefits counselor visiting Saipan

The U.S. Department of Veterans Benefits Administration will be visiting Saipan. A VA benefits counselor will be at the Saipan VA Outreach Clinic on Feb. 27, 2018, from 10am to 3:30pm. The benefits counselor will be available to answer benefits questions, and assist with the claim process. The Saipan VA Outreach Clinic is located at the MH II Bldg. Suite 206, Marina Heights Business Park in Garapan. To request an appointment, contact Ruth Coleman at 322-0035. (PR)

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2018 Digital Learning Competition

PHOTOS By BEA CABRERA



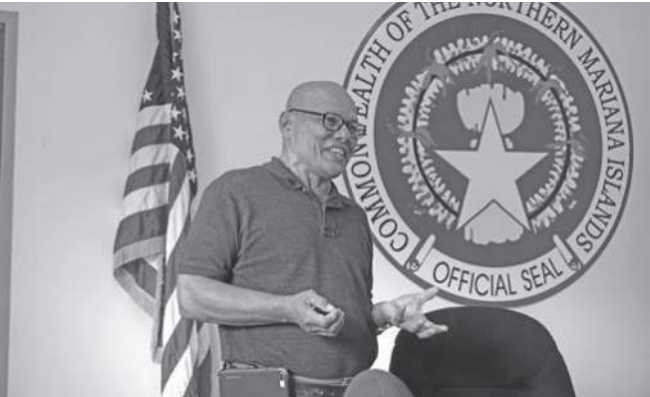
Jaden Pangelinan, the overall winner for the elementary level, said in her essay: "I was born with albinism. It is a genetic order that affects my vision. I am not able to see what my classmates see on the board without technology...I am able to do everything in class because of the smartboard and the iPads in my classroom. My teacher is able to enlarge the words on the smartboard so I can see everything."



Mary Heather Jingco, the high school level winner, from Dr. Rita H. Inos, said in her essay, "All in all, there are boundless opportunities that we are able to seize with the incorporation of technology in school. Right now in the 21st century, the CNMI's school system holds plenty of potential and we will be able to prepare our youth for the future."



Tomaica Blas, overall winner for the early elementary level in the 2018 Digital Learning Competition, said, "One thing I like about computers is that I get to explore the world without using the airplane. ...Have you ever ridden on an airplane? Well, I haven't but I've seen places through my computer."



Board of Education member Herman Atalg congratulates all the winners of the 2018 Digital Learning Competition at the awarding ceremony held Friday at the Board of Education office on Capital Hill.



Tomaica Blas receives her award from Public School System officials at the awarding ceremony for the 2018 Digital Learning Competition held Friday at the PSS Board of Education office on Capital Hill.



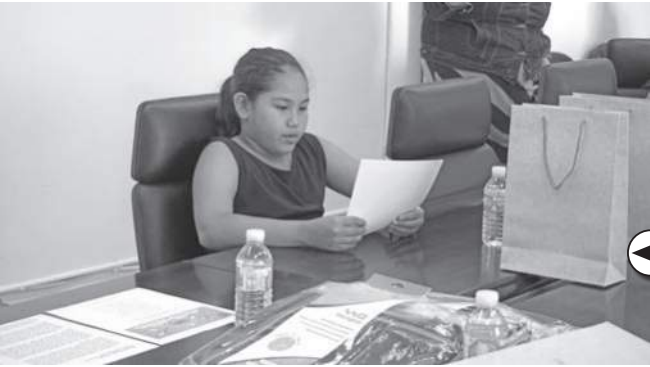
Education Commissioner Glen Muña gives his congratulatory remarks to the winners and their parents at the awarding ceremony for the 2018 Digital Learning Competition on Friday on Capital Hill.



Jaden Pangelinan accepts her award at the 2018 Digital Learning awarding ceremony held Friday at the Board of Education Office on Capital Hill.



Mary Heather Jingco accepts her prize from Public School System officials at the awarding ceremony of the 2018 Digital Learning Competition held Friday at the Board of Education office on Capital Hill.



Sky Gusteen Palacios, the overall winner for the middle school level, reads her winning poem at the awarding ceremony of the 2018 Digital Learning Competition held Friday at the Public School System office on Capital Hill.



Riya Nathrani, 3rd Grade teacher from William S. Reyes School, accepts her award as the educator level winner in the 2018 Digital Learning Competition. Nathrani is presented with her award Friday at the Board of Education office on Capital Hill.



The winners and PSS officials with the parents of the winners at the awarding ceremony held Friday at the Board of Education office on Capital Hill.



Sky Gusteen Palacios receives her award from Public School System officials at the awarding ceremony for the 2018 Digital Learning Competition held Friday at the PSS office on Capital Hill.



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Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

How many more in authority failed Stoneman Douglas High School?

Wow. The more answers we get, the more questions we have.

Amid a national debate over who should or shouldn't have guns in schools, Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel on Thursday dropped a stunner: Scot Peterson, a school resource officer at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, assigned to protect those inside, apparently stood armed, but frozen, outside the freshman building as young lives were being snuffed out as screams and the stutter of bullets from Nikolas Cruz's AR-15 bullets filled the air.

Peterson, a uniformed deputy, never went inside the school building where the horror was unfolding, Israel revealed at a news conference. Peterson's lack of action was captured on video.

According to Israel, the deputy took a position outside the building, "and he never went in."

When asked by reporters what the deputy should have done, Israel said: "Went in and addressed the killer. Killed the killer." That was his job, his duty.

Israel announced that Peterson resigned, retiring from the force.

So much for the highly anticipated "good guy with a gun." Students and parents' anguish must even be more unbearable now.

As authorities work to piece together how 19-year-old Cruz managed to carry out his horrible massacre, disturbing revelations keep coming to light. Peterson's dereliction of duty is just the latest.

We learned last week that the mighty FBI failed to follow up on tips about Cruz's threatening behavior and declaration, on social media, no less, that he wanted to be a "professional school shooter."

If the FBI had followed through, Cruz, maybe, just maybe, might have been stopped. There were plenty of signs he was a troubled young man and spiraling downward both before and after his mother died last fall.

Then there are those calls that the BSO received between 2010 and 2016 that brought officers to Cruz's home 39 times. In September 2016, deputies were called to quell a fight between Cruz and his mom. The deputy noted that the teen suffered from mental illness. Cruz's mother revealed her son had been cutting himself.

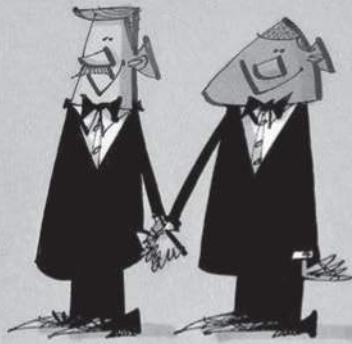
But a therapist on the scene deemed Cruz no threat to himself or anyone else, even though it was known he had mentioned wanting a firearm.

Ever since the Columbine, armed first responders have been told to track down the active shooter and kill him. No waiting for backup. A 30-year veteran, Peterson obviously couldn't do it. He stepped down on Thursday after he was suspended without pay by Israel pending an internal investigation into his actions.

And what a difference Peterson's presence could have

See **SCHOOL** on Next Page

GAY MARRIAGE



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GUESS WHICH ONES CONSERVATIVES FIND DANGEROUS ENOUGH TO BAN.

Why we need a consoler in chief

It used to be an American ritual, like the State of the Union address only grimmer and far more frequent. Shots would ring out: at a movie theater, a nightclub, a church, a school, a school, a school. Bodies would be counted. And then, not too long after, President Obama would speak. Sometimes, he would cry.

Although I served as a White House speechwriter from 2011 to 2016, I never crafted one of these somber addresses. The president worked on them with the most senior members of his team in the West Wing; I was in the Executive Office Building across the street. But as I watched successive drafts appear in my inbox, I saw how much effort went into them. The reams of research, sometimes done in mere hours, that gave the president the chance to say something personal about each victim. The diligent search for a piece of Scripture that could express grief, faith and resilience all at once. Above all, how to grapple with a reality unique to the United States. This had happened so often before. It would happen so often again.

I was lucky to work with and for extraordinary writers, on behalf of an extraordinary speaker. Some of Obama's most moving speeches were delivered as consoler in chief. But in low, doubting moments, I wondered whether these remarks were necessary, or even helpful. Why should the president insist on speaking clearly, forcefully and without hesitation when Congress refuses to act?

Now I think I know the answer.

President Donald Trump certainly cannot be accused of paying too much attention to mass shootings, and yet they continue: at an outdoor concert, an airport, a church, a school, a school, a school. Each time, the president's first instinct has been to respond with what can best be described as aggressive silence. After 17 students and teachers were killed at a Florida high school on Wednesday, the White House canceled the daily press briefing and @realDonaldTrump tweeted condolences in a rote style that sounded suspiciously like that of his staff. His follow-up tweet, a more personal one, had absolutely nothing to say about the dead and injured.

Thursday morning, after it became clear that silence was politically unsustainable, Trump finally delivered a statement on the shooting. His rhetoric was perfectly fine. Still, I couldn't help but recall a time when it didn't take a brewing PR crisis to motivate the president to address the public. And as I remembered my previous skepticism, I found myself missing a genuine consoler in chief.

Keep in mind that Trump is capable of immediate empathy, or at least of displaying it. When an American citizen is killed by an undocumented immigrant or a Muslim commits an act of

By **DAVID LITT**

Los Angeles Times

David Litt is the author of *Thanks, Obama: My Hopey Changey White House Years and a former speechwriter for President Obama.*



terrorism, Trump needs no prodding to stand in solidarity with victims. Nor should he. That's part of a president's job.

But Trump's empathy is selective. If an American family's heartbreak doesn't dovetail with his political agenda or threaten his approval ratings, he doesn't appear to feel their pain. This behavior isn't just callous. It's dangerous. The commander in chief is responsible for protecting all of us, regardless of background. In Trump's accounting, whose lives matter? Whose deaths warrant grief? To a terrifying degree, the answer seems to be driven by politics. Just consider his response to a hurricane in Puerto Rico, or the parents of a Muslim soldier killed in Iraq, or the widow of an African American soldier killed in Niger.

Perhaps following the example of the National Rifle Assn.—a strong supporter in the Republican primaries—Trump at first ignored Wednesday's shooting and hoped the story would go away. And yet even this description may be too charitable. As a candidate, Trump promised that he alone could fix what ailed the country. In his inaugural address, he promised that "American carnage" would end. The president's attitude on Wednesday sent a different message. These problems are unsolvable. There's nothing to be done.

What the president implies, his allies plainly state. Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida tweeted that Wednesday was "That terrible day you pray never comes," as if school shootings were acts of God rather than the inevitable outcome of freely available military-style guns. "Evil is sadly always present," opined Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, as if America's uniquely sky-high rate of gun violence is the product of an incurable moral disease. The Republican Party is weaponizing helplessness.

And not just around guns. In the worldview of the modern GOP, American leadership can't stop climate change. Raising the minimum wage can't help workers. Investing in universal pre-K can't give young people a shot at a better life. It's hopeless. But this sense of hopelessness isn't born of despair. It's born of a desire to loot the treasury on behalf of the wealthy, slash the social safety net, jeopardize our children's futures, and still be able

See **CONSOLE** on Page 11

Will we ever defend our kids?

WASHINGTON—At best the children's crusade to remove the battlefield weapons from our streets (and schools) is a very long shot, but a noble one that gives the nation the first slim chance to resolve the escalating crises of how to prevent another massacre.

If the candle of despair over what has become a tragedy so routine that it is shrugged off routinely can stay lit long enough there is an opportunity that it could give, to quote Edna Millay, "a wondrous light" that even the most diehard defenders of unfettered gun rights might be forced to retreat. The president, it seems, would arm a percentage of the 3.4 million public and private teachers at risks.

What is all this but a battle ground as authentic as Antietam or Anzio? That is how the students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., regard the death of 17 of their friends and teachers and are committed to stopping it. The beloved World War II correspondent Ernie Pyle, in one of his last columns before his death, wrote about the horrible monotony of the bodies piled one on another over the years.

This driving anger and sickness and fear that without exorcism seems certain of repetition is shared by the young to near hysteria. And with good reason. The Supreme Court's interpretation a decade ago of the Second Amendment right as individual not collective has fostered the carnage left by access

without meaningful challenge to weapons of mass destruction.

We common Americans know all this just as the members of Congress who continue to take National Rifle Association money to finance their re-election campaigns. What we also know is that we are selling chances on the lives of our children in every missed opportunity to correct the situation. The Second Amendment really only protects the manufacturer and seller, their right to peddle a commercial product. It also supports the sale of death not safety. It has no relationship whatsoever to its original purpose; and today's guns have no resemblance to the original product, except they both expel a deadly projectile. Also, there are vast differences in their geophysical impacts: What was mainly wilderness has become millions of Americans living in close proximity.

The youngsters thus are faced with a Congress and a high court so far intractable. The first is hobbled by the coffers of the gun lobby and the second by a flawed constitutional mandate. Neither seems capable of stopping the death toll or restoring the mental well-being of our children nationwide. If "lawmakers" refused to take action when a monster walked into an elementary school and murdered 20 babies, are they going to do so when the victims are teenagers?

The answer seems logical: of course not. But the Florida school is one of the best public institutions in the country and its students come from families with the ability to match the necessary dedication. It will be a long-term expensive drive that will include defeating some of the NRA's darlings like Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, who took it on the chin pretty heavily in his forum with the crusaders on national television last week.

By **DAN K. THOMASSON**

Tribune News Service



Dan Thomasson is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service and a former vice president of Scripps Howard Newspapers. Readers may send him email at: thomassondan@aol.com.

This cause will require strong backing and direction from major adult anti-gun groups and converts who are suddenly revolted by the slaughter. Several celebrities already have pledged sizable contributions to their cause.

The NRA is a cohesive smooth-running operation as well-funded as any lobby in history. It got where it did by convincing a huge number of Americans that without their firearms they will be vulnerable to all sorts of atrocities, including murderous incursions into our institutions.

My, my, could that happen?

The biggest deterrent to success may be the student themselves. While no one can question their fervor, they are preparing for the future both socially and academically at what should be one of the best times of their lives. Hopefully, they can spare enough of that precious time ultimately to save it from being stolen away by something called an AR-15 and other weapons designed for war.

As a trained forward observer, I can tell you the coordinates are out there for accurate fire direction control. We need to bring them together.

A Dire Diptych on Donald's Dad and Mumpsimus Mad

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and poet living on Tinian who taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

Miasmic Phantasmagoria for Father and Son

He was a minor player in the NYC KKK bigly little team Woody Guthrie's protest song called him 'Old Man Trump' arrested in a rally, Donald upset with who spilled the beans Dad learned to take a licking, get some bruises, a head bump from the 50's to the 90's bringing us up to date as of late the greedy two made millions in moolah hand over fist dealing with mobsters over construction and real estate on to Manhattan plucking lucky lucre they couldn't resist Don moved on to narcissism, new phenomena reality TV more money manipulation with pulchritudinous bitches You're Hired! You're Fired! believe you better believe me his fleets of tax preparation lawyers made no legal glitches a tale of the Trumpster monster's miasmic phantasmagoria the billionaire baby boy from Jamaica near Queens, Astoria

Miasmic Phantasm in a Congressional Chasm

(VIDE WIMP AGOG RIP, pay attention to acrostic beginnings)

Victory - they just couldn't believe it
Incredulity - they ain't seen no thing yet
Despair - at the solid one third base split
Egregious - belief of the solid one third base split

Weekly - back & forth, up and down a Wall St. clown
Insipid - tweets all tangled in lies and untrue
Monthly - rumors of mental incompetence around town
Practically - minute by minute a defensive way to spin it

Absolutely - no one had heard of anything like this before
Getting - support from partisans due to necessity
Ownership - media paints the picture all totally denied
Gobsmack- disbelief his brain pan is fried

Residential - alive but not doing well in the 'dump'
Ignorant - about most issues and ignoring reality
Presidential - new *mumpsimus master Tweety Trump

** A mumpsimus is a bigoted adherent to exposed but customary error; a custom or tenet adhered to by a mumpsimus.*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Losing to Guam

There are really no excuses for the Senate not to pass the cannabis law and you certainly should not fear the U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions who continues to tell lies about marijuana as Congress, which is why he is asking state prosecutors to use their own state's budget, which isn't going to happen as they have more real prioritized crimes to prosecute. Sessions has been a lifelong detractor of legalization when he said "good people don't use marijuana." He even said he liked the members of Ku Klux Klan until he found out they used cannabis. Sessions is an anti-drug warrior but he is powerless to "unring the legalization bell" without the support of funding from Congress. There is really nothing to stop the CNMI Senate from legalizing it!

Senators and governor, here are eight things we now know about legalization if it will help to speed things up:

1. Marijuana arrests have plummeted.
2. The racial disparities in marijuana arrests have not ended but not a CNMI problem.
3. A tide of teenage weedheads was not unleashed upon the nation.
4. The highways remain safe and even safer in states that have legalized cannabis for recreational use.
5. States with legal marijuana have lower rates of opioid-related harm. Marijuana is actually a gateway herb to get off hard drugs.
6. Marijuana tax revenues are big—and bigger than predicted.
7. Marijuana tax dollars are going for good things (education, healthcare, and numerous government activities).
8. Legal marijuana is a job creation engine that locals need

and will even entice locals in the U.S. mainland, especially those with experience in the cannabis industry, to return, given our shortage of labor and the high wages that will be offered by the industry.

Guam legalized medical marijuana in 2014 and they still don't have a laboratory nor a means to develop a supply of marijuana.

The CNMI's Senate bill has also been on the table since 2014 and it's not even a law yet! It took some states only a year or two but it is going to take almost a decade here in the Marianas. I guess the "island time" thing is really true but I think most people see it needs to change. I gave the Senate all the critical solutions to the challenges of legalization that Guam has been facing so it is really amazing to see the bill being stalled again.

No disrespect intended but I think it is truly time for Gov. Torres to weigh in on the issue like Gov. Calvo has done because his leadership is obviously needed, given the slow pace of the Senate. Do we really want to sit back and watch Guam or Hawaii capture the cannabis tourism market for our region? The competition for the cannabis medical/tourism market in our region of the Pacific is real and we had better stop playing around with something so serious for medical patients and so serious for locals and our economy. It's time to get it done now because each day that the Senate waits is a day delayed in giving the sick medication and a day late in getting more revenues for our government and the people!

Ambrose M. Bennett

Kagman, Saipan

CONSOLE

From Page 10

to sleep at night. After all, if we can't fix our problems together, greed isn't selfish. It's smart.

Which brings me back to a president, and a podium, and a time when the words that defined the White House were "Yes, We Can."

For Obama, consoling a nation was not just about feeling pain. It was about taking responsibility. "We bear responsibility for every child," he said after Sandy Hook. The victims are our chil-

dren. Gun violence is our problem. And while we're frightened, we're not helpless or hopeless. That's the kind of message we have a right to expect from our presidents. We also have the right to expect their actions to match their words.

So that's probably too much to expect from Trump. But if we refuse to follow his example, if we take responsibility where he shirks it, if we confront our challenges where he hides from them, if we speak up where he stays silent, then slowly but surely things will change. We can replace leaders whose first instinct is to ignore mass shootings with leaders whose first instinct is to address them. And then one day, maybe they won't have to.

SCHOOL

From Page 10

made. How many lives would have been spared if Peterson had at least distracted Cruz from his six-minute mission to kill. Petersen obviously feared for his own life. That's understand-






able. And it's likely he was outgunned, fueling the sheriff's announcement Wednesday that school officers would carry rifles from now on.

Questions remain about those 39 calls to Cruz's home. Israel should make clear he intends to answer them, swiftly and publicly.

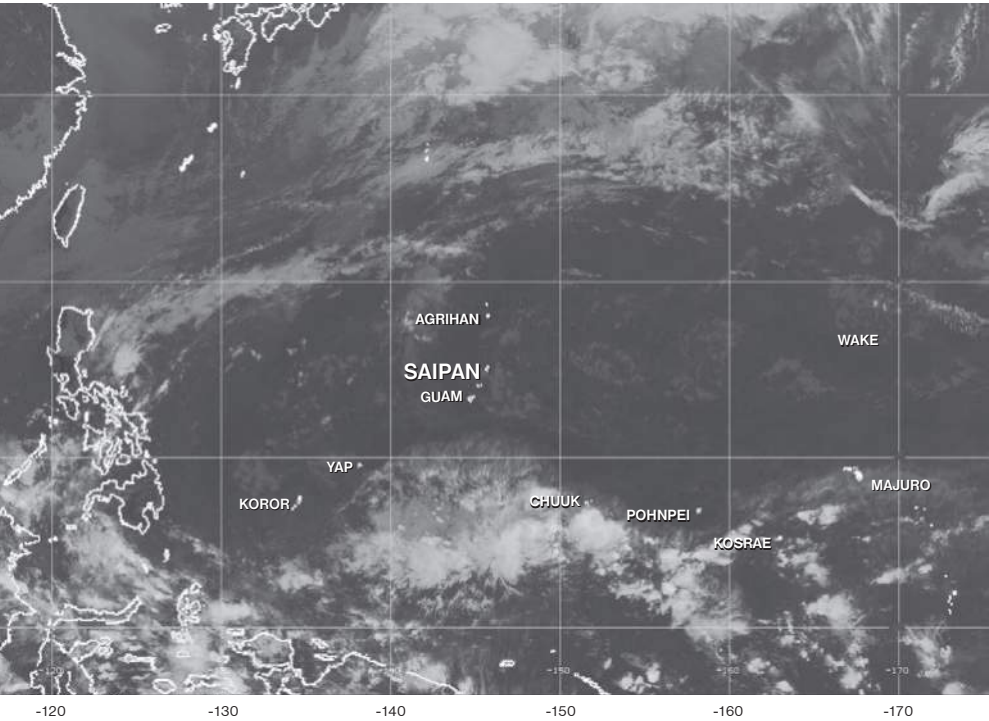
(c)2018 Miami Herald

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼78°	▲89° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:00 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2018

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Not much going on in the Marianas over the next few days. A fairly dry trade-wind pattern is now in place over the region. Model guidance shows the dry pattern continuing for at least the next week or so, with less than 0.4 inch of rainfall over the next week. Only spotty showers are likely through next weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Showers	86° / 77°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	83° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	83° / 78°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Showers	75° / 68°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	50° / 27°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	80° / 72°
Honolulu	Windy	81° / 72°
London	Snow Shower	36° / 25°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	57° / 44°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	91° / 75°
Melbourne	Windy	81° / 61°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	82° / 69°
New York	Sunny	55° / 41°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	63° / 54°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	32° / 19°
Busan	Rain	54° / 43°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	41° / 21°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	70° / 53°
San Francisco	Sunny	56° / 41°
Seoul	Rain	48° / 30°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	57° / 48°
Washington, DC	Sunny	58° / 42°



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

- Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
 - *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
 - Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
6:25 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.85
11:44 AM	LOW TIDE	1.14
4:49 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.92
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Wednesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:51 am	3:38 pm
Wednesday	-	4:49 am	4:40 pm
Thursday	-	5:43 am	5:42 pm
Friday	-	6:34 am	6:41 pm
Saturday	-	7:21 am	7:38 pm

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (GHG)			
JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)			
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (GHG)-SAIPAN			
JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily

1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

New Samsung phone: Nicer camera, static design, higher price

NEW YORK (AP)—Samsung unveiled new smartphones with largely unchanged designs and incremental improvements such as a better camera—accompanied by a second annual price increase for many customers.

The static design of the new Galaxy S9 underscores both the slowing pace of smartphone innovation and the extent to which other manufacturers, particularly Apple,

have caught up with Samsung features that once stood out. That includes everything from edge-to-edge screens to facial recognition to a water-resistant body.

The new phone's biggest selling point is a collection of minor improvements to its camera, which is already among the best in the smartphone business. The S9 promises even better low-light shots, while offering a video mode that appears to freeze fast-moving objects, matching a feature in some Sony phones. The S9 can automatically detect when there's high-speed motion to record, such as a cork popping off a bottle of champagne. A fifth of a second of video gets stretched out into six seconds.

While single features like this aren't likely to drive buying decisions, the slow-motion effect could be "the

kind of thing that will get a lot of attention," said Bob O'Donnell of the research firm Technalysis.

For the first time in a major phone, the S9 will let you change the camera's aperture to let in more light, making for better images in dark settings.

But analyst Carolina Milanesi of Creative Strategies warns that despite the improvements, the new camera is competing with already good cameras in earlier Samsung phones.

Nonetheless, you may have to pay more, though nothing quite at the level of last year's \$100 price hikes for the Galaxy S8. In the U.S., Verizon, AT&T and Sprint are raising prices from what the S8 cost at launch—to nearly \$800 for the regular-size S9 and more than \$900 for the larger S9 Plus. As people hold onto phones longer before upgrading, price hikes

let manufacturers and carriers make up for lost revenue.

Some of the increases will be offset with promotions. And T-Mobile will cut prices from last year's models. You can also buy unlocked versions more cheaply directly from Samsung—\$720 for the S9 and \$840 for the S9 Plus—though most people in the U.S. buy through their carriers.

The new phones were unveiled Sunday in Barcelona, Spain, and will be available March 16. Advance orders begin this Friday.

Here are some additional things to know:

■ **UNCHANGED:** The S9 features the same screen, same virtual home button and same battery capacity as the S8. Samsung did move the fingerprint sensor on the back to reduce smears on the camera lens.

■ **A SECOND LENS:** The camera on the Plus model now

has a second lens with twice the magnification, a feature already available in Samsung's Galaxy Note 8 and some iPhones. This means sharper close-ups.

■ **FUN WITH SELFIES:** Snap a selfie, and Samsung's software will turn that into an emoji version of you for sharing. It's usually a static image, though you can produce an animated version—much like the iPhone X's Animoji feature.

■ **VISUAL ASSISTANT:** Samsung's Bixby digital assistant mimics a similar Google feature that pulls up information on landmarks or other items you've just photographed. New Bixby capabilities let it instantly translate signs (point the camera, and the phone replaces the sign's text in a matching color and font) and provide nutritional info for that restaurant meal you're splurging on.

Nut allergy is a serious workplace concern

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By **MARIE G. MCINTYRE**

Tribune News Service



Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics." Send in questions and get free coaching tips at <http://www.your-officecoach.com>, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Q: My manager has recently started eating nuts at her desk, which is located right next to mine. Unfortunately, I have a serious nut allergy, so any contact with them could produce a life-threatening reaction. Even foods which contain tiny pieces of nuts can be hazardous.

I tried to discuss this with my boss, but she refused to believe me and insisted that the allergy is all in my head. When I explained how hazardous this situation could be, she became very defensive and said I was overreacting. How can I get her to take this seriously?

A: Your manager must either be a narcissist or an idiot. Given all the news stories about nut allergies, it's hard to believe that she has never heard of this problem. But even if she hasn't, her callous disregard for your health is absolutely appalling.

Considering the risk involved, you will need to act quickly. The obvious first step is to request a letter from your doctor which confirms the allergy, describes the dangers of exposure, and outlines the precautions you must take. Next, you must deliver this note to your boss in a calm, non-confrontational manner.

For example: "I know it may seem odd that simply having nuts nearby could be life-threatening. However, my physician has written a letter explaining the risks. I've lived with this condition for a long time, and it's really pretty scary. So even though I hate to inconvenience anyone, my doctor insists that I must avoid being around nuts."

With any luck, medical evidence will convince your self-centered manager to become more cooperative. But if not, then you need to find an influential ally in management or human resources who can resolve this issue. Without disparaging your boss, simply describe the problem and ask for some help.

Anyone having a severe food allergy should consider providing management with documentation from a physician. Otherwise, inadvertent exposure could easily turn a holiday party or birthday celebration into a catastrophic medical emergency.

Q: I have recently heard a lot of gossip about my boss having an affair with a staff member. Because I thought he should know what was on the grapevine, I decided to tell him about this rumor. He denied everything and firmly stated that there was no affair.

Now this woman is bragging about her "special relationship" with our manager, so everyone assumes he's guilty. I suggested that perhaps he should have human resources speak with her and put a stop to this, but he seems reluctant to take any action. Should I go to human resources myself?

A: There are two possibilities here. If your boss is not having an affair with this employee, he might simply be hoping that the rumor will die a natural death. But if this gossip is true, he may desperately want to avoid calling more attention to it.

Either way, sharing the grapevine information with him was appropriately helpful. However, addressing this issue is his responsibility, not yours. So even though your intentions are honorable, it's time to recognize that this is not your problem and simply let it go.



A woman holds the new Galaxy S9 and S9+ during the Samsung Galaxy Unpacked 2018 event on the eve of the Mobile World Congress wireless show, in Barcelona, Spain, Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018. AP

Studies are increasingly clear: Uber, Lyft congest cities

BOSTON (AP)—One promise of ride-hailing companies like Uber and Lyft was fewer cars clogging city streets. But studies suggest the opposite: that ride-hailing companies are pulling riders off buses, subways, bicycles and their own feet and putting them in cars instead.

And in what could be a new wrinkle, a service by Uber called Express Pool now is seen as directly competing with mass transit.

Uber and Lyft argue that in Boston, for instance, they complement public transit by connecting riders to hubs like Logan Airport and South

Station. But they have not released their own specific data about rides, leaving studies up to outside researchers.

And the impact of all those cars is becoming clear, said Christo Wilson, a professor of computer science at Boston's Northeastern University, who has looked at Uber's practice of surge pricing during heavy volume.

"The emerging consensus is that ride-sharing (is) increasing congestion," Wilson said.

One study included surveys of 944 ride-hailing users over four weeks in late 2017 in the Boston area. Nearly six in 10 said they would have used

public transportation, walked, biked or skipped the trip if the ride-hailing apps weren't available.

The report also found many riders aren't using hailed rides to connect to a subway or bus line, but instead as a separate mode of transit, said Alison Felix, one of the report's authors.

"Ride sharing is pulling from and not complementing public transportation," she said.

That's not quite what Uber founder Travis Kalanick suggested in 2015 when he said, "We envision a world where there's no more traffic in Boston in five years."

A study released in De-

cember found that large increases in the number of taxis and ride-sharing vehicles are contributing to slow traffic in Manhattan's central business district. It recommended policies to prevent further increases in "the number of vacant vehicles occupied only by drivers waiting for their next trip request."

In San Francisco, a study released in June found that on a typical weekday, ride-hailing drivers make more than 170,000 vehicle trips, about 12 times the number of taxi trips, and that the trips are concentrated in the densest and most congested parts of the city.

Nation

Students resolute as they re-enter school shooting site

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP)—The line of students and their parents wrapped around Stoneman Douglas High School, several thousand people entering the campus for the first time since a gunman took 17 lives nearly two weeks ago.

They walked solemnly but resolutely Sunday through gates that had been locked to all but law enforcement and school officials since the Valentine's Day shooting, set to collect backpacks and other belongings left behind as they the massacre. To enter, they passed within feet of the three-story building where the shooting happened. It is now cordoned off by a chain link fence that was covered with banners from other schools showing their solidarity.

"Just seeing the building was scary," freshman Francesca Lozano said as she exited the school with her mom. Still, she was happy to see her friends. "That made it a lot better."

The 3,200-student school reopens Wednesday and administrators said families would get phone calls about details later. Sunday was a day to ease into the return.

"Two of my best friends aren't here anymore," said freshman Sammy Cooper, who picked up the book bag he had dropped as he saw the accused gunman, 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, begin shooting. "But I'm definitely going to school Wednesday. I will



handle it."

Junior Sebastian Pena said the gathering was a chance to see friends and his teachers, and to "come together as a family."

The students were greeted by 17 people dressed in white costumes as angels standing beside a makeshift memorial outside the school. Organizer Terry Decarlo said the costumes are sent to every mass shooting and disaster so the survivors "know angels are looking over them and protecting them." Many of those

dressed as angels at Stoneman Douglas on Sunday were survivors of the 2016 mass shooting at the Orlando nightclub Pulse, where 49 people died.

Earlier Sunday, Florida Gov. Rick Scott's office said he had asked Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Rick Swearingen to investigate the law enforcement response to the shooting. The agency confirmed it would begin the probe immediately.

Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel has come under withering scrutiny after the

revelation last week that deputy Scot Peterson, the school's assigned security officer, was nearby when the shooting began but did not go into the building to confront Cruz during the attack. The sheriff's office is also facing a backlash for apparently mishandling some of the 18 tipster calls related to the suspected shooter. The tips were among a series of what authorities now describe as the clearest missed warning signs that Cruz, who had a history of disturbing behavior, posed a serious threat.

Israel defended his leadership Sunday and said investigators were looking into claims that three other deputies were on the scene but

AP
Parents and students walk into Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018, for an open house as parents and students returned to the school for the first time since seventeen victims were killed in a mass shooting at the school in Parkland, Fla. on Feb. 14.

failed to enter the school when the chance to save lives still existed. To date, the investigation has pointed to only one deputy being on school grounds while the killer was present, he told CNN.

Israel also labeled as "absolutely untrue" reports that the deputies waited outside even though children were inside the building needing urgent medical treatment.

State Rep. Bill Hager, a Republican lawmaker from Boca Raton, has called on Scott to remove Israel from office because of the missed red flags.

Israel vowed not to resign, saying Hager's letter "was full of misinformation" and "shameful, politically motivated."

Sweeping Georgia cybercrime bill would target 'snoopers'

ATLANTA (AP)—Lying about your weight on an online dating site? Checking out who won the Falcons game from your work computer? Using your computer hacking knowledge as an "ethical hacker?" Those actions may become illegal if a Georgia bill gets voted into law, civil liberty advocates say.

Supporters of a bill making its way through the state legislature say it's designed to give law enforcement the ability to prosecute "online snoopers"—hackers who break into a computer system but don't disrupt or steal data. The legislation came in response to a recent data breach at a Georgia university in which unauthorized cybersecurity experts noticed the vulnerability of Georgia's voting records.

But opponents say the legislation is so sweeping it could allow prosecutors to go after people who violate their user agreements or use a work computer for personal reasons. They also argue the bill will criminalize the "gray hats" of the cybersecurity world who use their hacking talents to find network weaknesses so they can be fixed, even if they never received permission to probe.

"This bill is not intended in any way, shape or form to criminalize legitimate behavior," said Republican Attorney General Chris Carr, whose office helped craft the measure.

Carr said only three states—Georgia, Virginia and Alaska—have no law against online "snooping," in which a hacker neither disrupts nor steals data. To remedy this, the measure criminalizes "any person who accesses a computer or computer network with knowledge that such access is without authority." The bill does not apply to parents who monitor their children's computer use, as well as those who are conducting "legitimate business."

The bill is specifically meant to stop criminal hacking, Carr said. Lawmakers backing the bill, which passed the Senate on Feb. 12, point to the acts of two unauthorized cybersecurity experts who in 2016 and 2017 discovered that a server at Kennesaw State University had left Georgia's 6.7 million voter records dangerously exposed. The men reported the vulnerabilities, but Carr said they should never have been snooping in the first place.

Congress has ideas on gun violence, but no consensus

WASHINGTON (AP)—After a 10-day break, members of Congress are returning to work under hefty pressure to respond to the outcry over gun violence. But no plan appears ready to take off despite a long list of proposals, including many from President Donald Trump.

Republican leaders have kept quiet for days as Trump tossed out ideas, including raising the minimum age to purchase assault-style weapons and arming teachers, though on Saturday the president tweeted that the latter was "Up to states."

Their silence has left little indication whether they are ready to rally their ranks behind any one of the president's ideas, dust off another proposal or do nothing. The most likely legislative option is bolstering the federal background check system for gun purchases, but it's bogged down after being linked with a less popular measure to ex-

pand gun rights.

The halting start reflects firm GOP opposition to any bill that would curb access to guns and risk antagonizing gun advocates in their party. Before the Feb. 14 shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, that killed 17 people, Republicans had no intention of reviving the polarizing and politically risky gun debate during an already difficult election year that could endanger their congressional majority.

"There's no magic bill that's going to stop the next thing from happening when so many laws are already on the books that weren't being enforced, that were broken," said Rep. Steve Scalise, R-La., the third-ranking House GOP leader, when asked about solutions. "The breakdowns that happen, this is what drives people nuts," said Scalise, who suffered life-threatening injuries when a gunman opened fire on lawmakers' baseball team

practice last year.

Under tough public questioning from shooting survivors, Trump has set high expectations for action.

"I think we're going to have a great bill put forward very soon having to do with background checks, having to do with getting rid of certain things and keeping other things, and perhaps we'll do something on age," Trump said in a Fox News Channel interview Saturday night. He added: "We are drawing up strong legislation right now having to do with background checks, mental illness. I think you will have tremendous support. It's time. It's time."

Trump's early ideas were met with mixed reactions from his party. His talk of allowing teachers to carry concealed weapons into classrooms was rejected by at least one Republican, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Senate Majority Leader Mitch

McConnell, R-Ky., both spoke to Trump on Friday. Their offices declined comment on the conversations or legislative strategy.

Some Republicans backed up Trump's apparent endorsement of raising the age minimum for buying some weapons.

Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., said he would support raising the age limit to buy a semi-automatic weapon like the one used in Florida. Rubio also supports lifting the age for rifle purchases. Rep. Brian Mast, R-Fla., a longtime NRA member, wrote in The New York Times that he now supports an assault-weapons ban.

Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., said he expects to talk soon with Trump, who has said he wants tougher background checks, as Toomey revives the bill he proposed earlier with Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., to expand presale checks for firearms purchases online and at gun shows.

Asia

North Korean envoy, in South, opens door to US talks

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea (AP)—A North Korean envoy making a rare visit to South Korea said Sunday that his country was willing to open talks with the United States, a rare step toward diplomacy between enemies after a year of North Korean missile and nuclear tests and direct threats of war from both Pyongyang and Washington.

Kim Yong Chol, who Seoul believes masterminded two attacks in 2010 that killed 50 South Koreans, was in South Korea for the end of the Olympics. He said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un wanted to improve ties with Washington and had “ample intentions of holding talks” with its rival, according to the South’s presidential office.

He made the remarks during a meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who is eager to engage the North after one of the most hostile periods in recent years on the Korean Peninsula.

Moon, who was invited a day after the opening ceremonies to Pyongyang for a summit with Kim Jong Un, also said that Washington and Pyongyang should quickly meet to “fundamentally solve” the standoff on the Korean



AP
Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee, front left, South Korean President Moon Jae-in, front right, wave with Ivanka Trump, back right, U.S. President Donald Trump's daughter during the closing ceremony of the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018.

Peninsula.

Kim later sat in the VIP box at Olympic Stadium in Pyeongchang for the Olympic closing ceremonies, just feet away from Donald Trump's daughter, Ivanka, and the top U.S. military commander on the peninsula, Gen. Vincent

Brooks. The former anti-Seoul military intelligence chief watched K-pop divas and fireworks and stood for the South Korean national anthem.

Even the faintest possibility of diplomacy will be welcomed by many. But there will also be widespread skepticism among conservatives in Seoul and Washington, with many wondering if the North is simply looking for economic

relief after a series of increasingly tough international sanctions slapped on Pyongyang for its illicit weapons programs or more time to develop those weapons.

Moon has yet to accept the North's invitation for a summit, but he has advocated engagement with Pyongyang his entire political career and likely wants to go.

But he must first strike a bal-

ance with Washington, which has a policy meant to isolate and sanction the North until it agrees to give up its nukes. Some observers believe that Pyongyang is trying to drive a wedge to win concessions from Seoul.

There was no immediate comment from the United States, where it was dawn when the statement was released.

Kim Yong Chol was head

of the North's military intelligence when the 2010 attacks on South Korea took place and is currently a vice chairman of the ruling party's central committee tasked with inter-Korea relations.

With decades of experience, he is one of the most powerful people in the North's ruling regime. Seoul decided to temporarily take him off of a blacklist to allow the visit.

South Korea is hoping to ease tensions by allowing the North to participate in the games and send senior delegations.

Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong, attended the opening ceremony in an historic first—no member of the ruling Kim family had ever traveled to the South before. She invited President Moon Jae-in to a summit with her brother in Pyongyang. The delegation to the closing ceremony was expected to follow up on that invitation while in South Korea.



ASIAN BRIEFS

Cambodia's ruling party claims sweeping win in Senate vote

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—The ruling party of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen claimed a sweeping win in Sunday's elections for the country's Senate, a victory that it assured itself by eliminating any serious opposition from the contest. Sok Eysan, a spokesman for the Cambodian People's Party, said it had won a landslide victory. Privately, the party was claiming to have won all 58 of the seats that were voted on by the country's 11,572 commune councilors. Two additional senators are appointed by the National Assembly and another two by King Norodom Sihamoni. Sunday's vote was seen as a foretaste of a scheduled July general election for the National Assembly that is also expected to affirm Hun Sen's rule. The only opposition party in Parliament, the Cambodia National Rescue Party, was dissolved in November after aggressive legal challenges by the government were sustained by the politicized courts.

New Aussie deputy prime minister elected after resignation

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—A new Australian deputy prime minister was appointed on Monday after his predecessor quit over a sexual harassment allegation. Lawmakers in the Nationals party elected Michael McCormack as their leader. The junior coalition partner's former leader Barnaby Joyce resigned Friday as both party leader and a Cabinet minister. Joyce did not resign from Parliament, ensuring that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's single-seat majority in the House of Representatives is maintained. McCormack is a former veterans affairs minister. The rural-focused Nationals' leader automatically becomes Turnbull's deputy under their coalition agreement with the prime minister's conservative Liberal Party. "I want to make sure that people know that in me they will have a fighter. I have a huge challenge ahead of me," McCormack, 53, told reporters after his election.

China paves way for Xi Jinping to remain leader for years

BEIJING (AP)—China's ruling Communist Party has proposed scrapping term limits for the country's president, the official news agency said, appearing to lay the groundwork for party leader Xi Jinping to rule as president beyond 2023.

The party's Central Committee proposed to remove from the constitution the expression that China's president and vice president "shall serve no more than two consecutive terms," the Xinhua News Agency said Sunday.

"Xi Jinping has finally achieved his ultimate goal when he first embarked on Chinese politics—that is to be the Mao Zedong of the 21st century," said Willy Lam, a political analyst at the Chinese University in Hong Kong, referring to the founder of communist China.

Xi, 64, cemented his status as the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao in the 1970s at last year's twice-a-decade Communist Party congress, where his name and a political theory attributed to him were added to the party constitution as he was given a second five-

year term as general secretary.

It was the latest move by the party signaling Xi's willingness to break with tradition and centralize power under him. Xi has taken control of an unusually wide range of political, economic and other functions, a break with the past two decades of collective leadership.

"What is happening is potentially very dangerous because the reason why Mao Zedong made one mistake after another was because China at the time was a one-man show," Lam said. "For Xi Jinping, whatever he says is the law. There are no longer any checks and balances."

Xi is coming to the end of his first five-year term as president and is set to be appointed to his second term at an annual meeting of the rubber-stamp parliament that starts March 5. The proposal to end term limits will likely be approved at that meeting.

Term limits on officeholders have been in place since they



were included in the 1982 constitution, when lifetime tenure was abolished.

Political analysts said the party would likely seek to justify the proposed removal of the presidential term limit by citing

Xi's vision of establishing a prosperous, modern society by 2050.

"The theoretical justification for removing tenure limits is that China requires a visionary, capable leader to see China through this multi-decade grand plan," Lam said.

"But the other aspect of it could just be Mao Zedong-like megalomania; he is just convinced that he is fit to be an emperor for life," he said.

Hu Xingdou, a Beijing-based political commentator, said while Xi might need an extra five-year term or two to carry out his plans, the country is unlikely to return to an era of lifetime tenure for heads of state.

"President Xi may be in a leading position for a relatively long time," Hu said. "This is beneficial to pushing

forward reforms and the fight against corruption, but it's impossible for China to have lifetime tenure again."

"We have drawn profound lessons from the system of lifetime tenures," Hu said, referring to the chaos and turmoil of Mao's 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution.

Xi's image dominates official propaganda, prompting suggestions that he is trying to build a cult of personality, and evoking memories of the upheaval of that era. Party spokespeople reject such talk, insisting Xi is the core of its seven-member Standing Committee, not a lone strongman.

At last year's party congress, Xi hailed a "new era" under his leadership and laid out his vision of a ruling party that serves as the vanguard for everything from defending national security to providing moral guidance to ordinary Chinese. At the close of the congress, the party elevated five new officials to assist Xi on his second five-year term, but stopped short of designating an obvious successor to him.

World

Violence drops in Syrian capital, its suburbs after UN vote

BEIRUT (AP)—Despite a drop in intensity, shelling and bombardment in the Syrian capital and its embattled eastern suburbs killed at least six people Sunday following the U.N. Security Council's unanimous approval of a resolution demanding a 30-day cease-fire across Syria, opposition activists and residents of Damascus said.

Attacks on residential areas appear to have shifted to strikes on front lines where some of the most intense fighting took place throughout the day between government forces and their allies against insurgents. State media said that troops pushed into the eastern suburbs, reports that the opposition denied.

Opposition activists reported clashes on the southern edge of the rebel-held suburbs, known as eastern Ghouta, and two airstrikes late on Saturday night, shortly after the resolution was adopted. During the day Sunday, more shelling and airstrikes were reported in eastern Ghouta and Damascus.

The drop in violence came after a week of intense airstrikes and shelling that killed more than 500 people in eastern Ghouta and left dozens dead or wounded in the government-held Damascus, which rebels pelted with mortar shells.

"This has been the calmest night since last Sunday," said Rami Abdurrahman who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, referring to the start of the bombing campaign on Feb. 19. He added that clashes between troops and rebels on Sunday were the most intense this month.



Syrian Ambassador to the United Nations Bashar al-Ja'afari, center right, sits in the United Nations Security Council chambers, Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018 at United Nations headquarters. AP

Syrian state TV said that the army captured several buildings in the rebel-held suburb of Harasta and pushed into several other areas on eastern Ghouta that is besieged by government forces from all sides. It also said that troops captured the small towns of Nashabiyeh, Hazrama and Housh al-Salihyah on the southeastern edge of eastern Ghouta.

The Ghouta Media Center, an activist collective, said members of the Army of Islam insurgent group repelled the Syrian army's attacks on several fronts adding that many soldiers were killed.

The push by the army, al-

though still limited, appears to be similar to steps taken in rebel-held eastern neighborhoods of the northern city of Aleppo that government forces captured one after another until rebels eventually agreed to leave the city in December 2016, marking President Bashar Assad's biggest victory since the conflict began in 2011.

"The Assad regime and his allies have shown no respect to the Security Council by launching their most intense offensive on Ghouta from several directions hours after the resolution was adopted," said Ghouta-based activist Ahmad Khanshour. He added that gov-

ernment forces "did not succeed in advancing one meter."

Asked whether people were able to leave their underground shelters where they have been hiding for days with little food and water, Khanshour said: "We are still underground and dying." Khanshour added that he is hiding with 45 others in a shelter and they have been surviving on rice, crushed wheat and pasta.

The Observatory said Sunday's airstrikes and shelling killed eight people and wounded dozens in several areas in eastern Ghouta. The opposition's Syrian Civil Defense, also known as White Helmets,

said the six were killed in the towns of Saqba, Beit Sawa, Arbeen and Hammouriyeh.

State news agency SANA said insurgents breached the truce by firing 15 shells Sunday on government-held areas on the edge of Ghouta.

Dr. Sakhr al-Dimashqi, a surgeon at a Ghouta clinic, told The Associated Press that several shells hit some towns in the suburbs, adding that they received six wounded people at his clinic.

"The shelling today is not as intense as over the past week," he said.

The two largest and most powerful rebel factions in Gh-

outa, Failaq al-Rahman and Army of Islam issued statements saying they will abide by the cease-fire unless they are forced to fire in self-defense. Both called for the "immediate delivery" of emergency aid.

The resolution excludes members of the Islamic State group and al-Qaida-linked fighters. Ghouta is also home to a few hundred members of the al-Qaida-linked Levant Liberation Committee.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said Sunday that the fight against IS and al-Qaida's affiliate will continue, despite what it described as attempts by certain external players to engage "international terrorists and groups of opposition militants joining them to implement plans that are still nurtured to overthrow the legitimate authorities of Syria and dismember the country."

It added that "the terrorists won't get any respite."

Damascus residents said there's more traffic in the streets, compared to previous days and most schools and universities were open on Sunday. They said some private schools were still closed, especially those close to the front lines with Ghouta.

Some residents of the capital said they were unhappy with the truce, adding that they believe the rebels will violate it and that the Syrian army should crush the gunmen outside the capital.

"The army has given them many truces, more than they deserve and the result was more shells," said Damascus resident Abdul-Razzak Khaleifah, 37. "The army has the right to retaliate to defend the homeland and the civilians."

Venezuelans recycle worthless bolivar bills into crafts

CUCUTA, Colombia (AP)—A family of Venezuelan immigrants to Colombia are repurposing their worthless bolivars into origami-made paper wallets, belts and even purses as the currency plunges further in value amid four-digit inflation.

Each collector item produced by Richard Segovia fetches between \$10 and \$15—a huge markup from the pennies that bolivars retrieve on Venezuela's black market.

Segovia, 24, arrived two months ago to the Colombian border city of Cucuta with his wife and a cousin fleeing a dead-end job at a warehouse in Venezuela, where he made the equivalent of just \$2.50 a month. He came up with the idea to make artwork one night when he and his cousin

were back in Caracas staring at a pile of cash.

"We had a lot of cash but nothing to buy, because in Venezuela your money is worth nothing," he said.

So, he started folding and creasing Venezuela's colorful bills into trinkets and then larger creations like purses and bags. Each item consists of around 800 to 1,000 mostly 50 and 100-bolivar notes—less than 50 U.S. cents.

He has found a sympathetic audience among Colombians looking to extend a helpful hand to the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who've flooded across the border in recent months.

On a busy day, Segovia can sell as many as 20 items, and a bulk order recently came in from a woman who runs

a boutique in Bogota who heard about his creations on local TV.

With his earnings, he manages to send around \$15 to his family in Caracas whenever he can.

"It's not a lot of money, but it's enough to have breakfast," he said.

While sales are brisk, he's hardly living high on the hog.

He and his wife, who is five months pregnant, sleep at a flophouse provided for free by a local transportation company. They set up shop daily on a busy sidewalk near the bus station, seemingly unconcerned by the prospect of a thief snatching away the piles of money that sit like bricks on their plastic table.

"I'm not going to run out of raw material," he jokes.

Nigerian government acknowledges 110 girls still missing

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP)—Nigeria's government acknowledged Sunday that 110 girls remain missing nearly a week after Boko Haram militants attacked their town. Frustrated family members already had compiled a list of missing girls after saying officials were being slow to respond.

The fate of the girls is not known, but witnesses said the Islamic extremists specifically asked where the girls' school was located. Some eyewitnesses reporting seeing young women taken away at gunpoint.

Information Minister Lai Mohammed made the announcement Sunday after meetings were held with family members and others, some of whom have criticized the government for taking days to make such an announcement.

Air Force spokesman Olatokunbo Adesanya said in a

press statement Sunday that "the renewed efforts at locating the girls are being conducted in close liaison with other surface security forces."

Many fear the girls were abducted as brides for Boko Haram extremists. The group kidnapped 276 girls from a boarding school in Chibok in 2014 and forced them to marry their captors. About 100 of the Chibok girls have never returned to their families in nearly four years.

The militants arrived Monday evening in the town of Dapchi in Nigeria's Yobe state, sending many fleeing into the surrounding bush amid the hail of gunfire. While Nigeria's president has called the girls' disappearance a "national disaster," local officials at first falsely indicated that some of those abducted were rescued while others were hiding and would

return in the coming days.

Bashir Manzo, whose daughter Fatima is among the missing, said the chances the children are merely hiding in the bush are slim.

"All those that fled into the bush had been brought back to the school on Tuesday, and a roll call was taken after which they had all gone home to meet their parents," he said.

Nigeria's president said earlier no effort will be spared to locate them.

"The entire country stands as one with the girls' families, the government and the people of Yobe State. This is a national disaster. We are sorry that this could have happened and share your pain. We pray that our gallant armed forces will locate and safely return your missing family members," President Muhammadu Buhari said earlier in the week.

Focus



Noble Peace Laureate from Yemen Tawakkol Karman, right, holds a Rohingya refugee child during her visit to Kutupalong refugee camp near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018. Three female Nobel Peace Laureates began a weeklong trip to Bangladesh to meet Rohingya women who have been tortured, raped and even killed by Myanmar soldiers amid a delayed repatriation process. AP

Months after exodus began, Rohingya see no end to suffering

By TOFAYEL AHMAD and JULHAS ALAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Their houses are often made of plastic sheets. Much of their food comes from aid agencies. Jobs are few, and there is painfully little to do. The nightmares are relentless.

But six months after their horrors began, the Rohingya Muslims who fled army attacks in Myanmar for refuge in Bangladesh feel immense consolation.

"Nobody is coming to kill us, that's for sure," said Mohammed Amanullah, whose village was destroyed last year just before he left for Bangladesh with his wife and three children. They now live in the Kutupalong refugee camp

outside the coastal city of Cox's Bazar. "We have peace here," Amanullah said.

On Aug. 25, Rohingya insurgents attacked several security posts in Myanmar's Rakhine state, killing at least 14 people. Within hours, waves of revenge attacks broke out, with the military and Buddhist mobs marauding through Rohingya villages in bloody pogroms, killing thousands, raping women and girls, and burning houses and whole villages. The aid group Doctors Without Borders has estimated that at least 6,700 Rohingya were killed in Myanmar in the first month of the violence, including at least 730 children younger than 5. The survivors flooded into Bangladesh.

Six months later, there are few signs Rohingya are going home anytime soon.

Myanmar and Bangladesh have signed an agreement to gradually repatriate Rohingya in "safety, security and dignity," but the process has been opaque and the dangers remain. New satellite images have shown empty villages and hamlets leveled, erasing evidence of the Rohingya's former lives. And with 700,000 having fled Myanmar since August, more Rohingya continue to flee.

So for now, the refugees wait.

"If they agree to send us back, that's fine, but is it that easy?" asked Amanullah. "Myanmar must give us citizenship. That is our home. Without citizenship, they will torture us again. They will kill us again."

He said he would only return under the protection of U.N. peacekeepers: "They must take care of us there. Otherwise it will not work."

Buddhist-majority Myanmar doesn't recognize the Rohingya as an official ethnic group, and they face intense discrimination and persecution. Myanmar authorities maintain that security operations in Rakhine state have been aimed at clearing out insurgents.

M. Shahriar Alam, Bangladesh's junior foreign minister, said his country would not repatriate any Rohingya against their will, but urged the international community to continue to put pressure on Myanmar to create conditions for a sustainable repatriation.

He also expressed displeasure at reports that Rohingya were still arriving in Bangladesh.

"We need to recognize that the problem has its origin in Rakhine and its comprehensive solution has to be found there," Alam was quoted as saying Sunday by the United

News of Bangladesh agency. "Bangladesh is only unjustifiably bearing the brunt of it."

On Sunday, two Nobel Peace laureates visited refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and talked to rape victims. Myanmar security forces have been accused of raping and sexually assaulted women and girls before and during major attacks on Rohingya villages.

Katia Gianneschi, a spokeswoman for the Nobel Women's Initiative who accompanied Yemen's Tawakkol Karman and Northern Ireland's Mairead Maguire to the camp, said in an email that the women talked to the victims and heard their stories. Another laureate, Iran's Shirin Ebadi, will join her colleagues on Monday.

The Nobel Women's Initiative, established in 2006, is a platform of six female Nobel Peace laureates.

The three laureates, who are on a weeklong visit to Bangladesh to meet the refugees, accused Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her country's military of unleashing atrocities, and said the international community should bring those responsible to justice.

Minara Begum, 25, who said she was raped and tortured by soldiers, told reporters after the laureates' visit that they hugged her and held her tightly and cried as they heard the stories of brutality.

"They were overwhelmed. They cried with us. They could not hold their tears," Begum said. "I was also touched by their eagerness to know our sad stories."

Karman said in an email Saturday that she and her colleagues were standing "in solidarity with displaced Rohingya women and calling for Rohingya women's voices to be heard."

She said Rohingya women are twice victimized—for being Rohingya and for being women—and "are affected by the ethnic cleansing and are also subject to high levels of sexual and gender-based violence."

"Rohingya women's unique needs are largely unmet in refugee camps in Bangladesh," she said. "Less than 20 percent of displaced Rohingya women who have survived sexual violence have access to post-rape care."

Meanwhile, the children in the camps face a particularly difficult time. The U.N. estimates children are the heads of 5,600 refugee families.

A survey of children's lives inside the camps showed they faced an array of terrors, from girls reporting concerns of harassments near the camp toilets to fears that elephants and snakes could attack them as they collect firewood.

"We cannot expect Rohingya children to overcome the traumatic experiences they've suffered when exposed to further insecurity and fears of violence in the camps," Mark Pierce, country director for Save the Children in Bangladesh, said in a statement.

"The overwhelming message from these children is that they are afraid," Pierce said. "This is no way for a child to live."

The situation will worsen soon. Seasonal monsoon rains will begin pounding the refugees' plastic-and-bamboo city in April.

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW: What's in a \$63,000 Ford F-150?

By ROBERT DUFFER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The 2018 Ford F-150 has just the right balance of capability, comfort and convenience to make you feel that what you want is what you need. That is the success story of America's best-selling vehicle for nearly four decades: to convince the market that want and need are the same.

I know I'm not alone in this not-need. "Daddy, I want a truck," says my daughter, all the time. The guys in the neighborhood give trucks the thrice-over much more thoroughly than any luxury sports cars I've tested.

There are plenty of people who actually need a pickup for work, but Ford and other manufacturers know it's the millions of undecideds who move the needle on these higher margin rigs. I'm a suburban-living office-commuting father with enough home projects and weekend warrior parenting duties to want the uncompromising capability of a pickup, even if it doesn't fit in my garage. We fit five easily in the heated luxury of the Supercrew cab, and threw hockey bags and other gear in the 5.5-foot bed without the regard you'd have for other enclosed ve-

hicles. If other rides feel like a Swiss army knife in their functionality, then the F-150 is the entire tool shed. And when the season's worst snowstorm blanketed the area, this beast's 4x4 capabilities came in handy.

Just like that, I have a need. Turning a want into a need really depends on the specific iteration of truck in a seemingly endless list of styles and options. But let's start with what's changed across the seven trim levels in Ford's plan to stay ahead of the redesigned 2019 Chevy Silverado and 2019 Ram 1500.

The midcycle refresh streamlines the grille into two bars instead of three, and those two bars stretch more broadly over the fascia, connecting the revised headlights in line with the super-duty truck designs of Ford's heaviest lifters. It looks more commanding, and in rear-view mirrors, more bullying. The taillights have more LED flair, and the gate is stamped

with the trim level, which was Platinum in our case.

The Platinum Supercrew is second only to the Limited luxury trim. It came with 20-inch wheels, which come in six different styles because selecting a truck is like mixing and matching from the world's coolest Lego bin.

All the engine offerings are enhanced for 2018 thanks to two fuel injectors per cylinder. The free-breathing 5-liter V-8 engine in the tester gets 10 more horsepower to 395 hp and a boost in torque to 400 pound-feet, affirming its best-in-class 3,270 pounds of payload capacity, or the stuff it can haul in the bed and the cabin. That's more than a hockey team and gear.

The V-8 rumble is present but insulated by the comfy cabin. Feed the throttle and it reacts immediately, sub-

limely. The 10-speed automatic transmission that replaces the six-speed has more work to do but it's not as noticeable as the increase in fuel efficiency. We averaged 18 mpg combined in our week with the Platinum, which is outstanding for a 4X4 vehicle of this size.

The inside is where the Platinum trim really shines, and further blurs the demarcation between want and need. The tester came with the \$1,295 twin-panel moonroof, which wasn't as cool as the power rear window that comes standard. The heated rear seats also fold up for that Costco run in the rain or to let Fido have access to stuff a snout out either window.

Up front the controls are durable and glove friendly, and the voice-activated navigation as well as the suite of steering wheel controls ren-

der the 8-inch touch screen as a mere display screen. This is a good thing. Visually, the small screen in the large F-150 is the only compromise in the truck — the vents dwarf the thing, but the functionality is pretty good. The broad 8-inch vehicle info display in the instrument cluster, which Ford calls "productivity screen," is excellent for accessing even more info than housed in the touch screen.

The convenience technology is complemented with safety tech, of course, including the \$2,540 preferred equipment group, with adaptive cruise control and start/stop technology. That grouping also includes the step bar in the tailgate. Put down the gate, press a button, and the step comes out, along with a vertical bar to use as a handle. The handle part is

overkill, but it's all part of the \$63,000 package. I still prefer the fender step in the Chevy Silverado.

Despite the conveniences and luxury elements such as the standard power running board, the F-150 is still a bang-around truck. You just can't get that supreme durability and capability, all while ensconced in a cabin full of creature comforts, in other vehicles. The only compromise you'll have to make is with your garage space, which may better define the line between want and need.

NUTS & BOLTS

2018 Ford F-150 4x4 Supercrew Platinum at a glance

- Vehicle type: Pickup truck luxe
- Base price: \$57,580
- As tested: \$62,505 (excluding \$1,295 destination)
- Mpg: 16 city, 22 highway
- Engine: 5-liter V8
- Transmission: 10-speed automatic in four-wheel drive

TNS

The 2018 Ford F-150 has just the right balance of capability, comfort and convenience.



By TOM KRISHER
AP AUTO WRITER

Air bag danger: Ford, Mazda add pickups to do-not-drive list

DETROIT (AP)—Ford and Mazda are adding more than 35,000 pickup trucks in North America to a list of vehicles that should not be driven because they have Takata air bag inflators with a high risk of exploding.

The warning includes 33,428 Ranger and 1,955 Mazda B-Series small pickups from 2006 model year, according to both companies. Ford, which made the B-Series for Mazda, found test results showing that the trucks had inflators that ruptured or recorded high inter-

nal pressure readings, spokeswoman Elizabeth Weigandt said Monday.

The companies and the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said dealers will tow the pickups to service bays to replace the faulty inflators and provide loaner vehicles. Parts for the repairs already are available.

Rangers added to the do-not-drive list were built between Aug. 5 and Dec. 15, 2005.

"Affected owners are urged not to drive these vehicles and

to contact Ford and Mazda immediately to schedule a free repair," NHTSA said in a printed release.

Takata uses ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion to inflate air bags. But the chemical can deteriorate and burn too fast, blowing apart metal canisters and hurling shrapnel into drivers and passengers. At least 22 people have died and more than 180 have been hurt because of the problem.

The inflators also caused the largest series of automotive

recalls in U.S. history. About 69 million inflators are being recalled in the U.S. and over 100 million worldwide are being recalled.

Last month Ford told 2,900 owners of the 2006 Ranger not to drive them after finding out that a West Virginia man was killed by an exploding inflator.

Steve Mollohan, 56, of the Hedgesville, West Virginia, area died July 1 in nearby Martinsburg, about 80 miles north-east of Washington, D.C., according to a Pittsburgh-based law

firm representing the family.

Ford said it was notified of the accident in December. After some investigation, the company determined that the truck's inflator was made on the same day as one that exploded and killed a South Carolina man driving a Ranger in 2015.

Ford's Weigandt said the small pickups already were under recalls for driver and passenger inflators. In most cases owners can still drive recalled vehicles, but Ford issued the do-not-drive warning

because of the elevated risk.

In January of 2016, Ford recalled about 361,000 Rangers in the U.S. and Canada from the 2004 to 2006 model years to replace the driver's inflators. The recall came after the government announced the December 2015 death of Joel Knight, 52, of Kershaw, South Carolina, that was caused by a Takata air bag inflating in his 2006 Ranger. A similar number has been recalled for passenger inflators.

Weigandt said that Ford did not find a higher risk of inflator rupture in the rest of the recalled Rangers. "We respond to the data," she said.

Life & Style

Cruz brings academic pride to Tinian

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TINIAN—The island of Tinian is taking pride in the educational achievement of one of its youthful residents, Mariah Cruz, who has already been accepted to two Ivy League institutions in the United States.

Cruz, a senior at Tinian High

School who will be graduating in May, has already been accepted to Yale University and Princeton University once she goes to college, but she has yet to decide on one.

Cruz has also been accepted at Stanford University and University of California Berkeley.

Cruz was unsure if she would even make it to an Ivy

League schools, so finding out that she had been accepted into two has made her more than ecstatic.

When asked which school she is leaning to, Cruz said the decision remains difficult because all the schools she was accepted to are her dream schools. "I have a deadline which is March 1. I haven't decided yet because I am still

not sure."

Cruz believes in putting in an extra effort when presented with an activity or opportunity. "If you believe you can do it, you will do it...if I can do it, anybody can," she said.

At first, Cruz did not tell her parents that she had applied to Ivy League schools, thinking it is best to tell them once she is accepted. She broke the

good news to her parents only last Feb. 14.

Tinian Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas proudly announced Cruz's achievement at the annual Pika Festival last Saturday, saying that, as a mayor, he is proud when the youth in his jurisdiction achieve their major goals.

"It is important for me to show our people that if she

can do it, you can make it from Tinian High School. I want there to be a sense of pride and love for our local schools," he said.

San Nicolas said that it also encourages the other youth on Tinian to reach for the skies because there is no such thing as an unattainable dream, regardless of what the circumstances may be.

IPI-CSR begins 2018 village cleanup outreach

"The Village Pride Project," the signature pioneering village cleanup work of Imperial Pacific International, LLC's Corporate Social Responsibility program, began its 2018

cycle with extensive cleanup work in the northern part of Saipan last week.

The village cleanup program was established two years ago. It is designed as a

long-term initiative for IPI-CSR toward the promotion of community engagement and participation in weekly village cleanups.

Essentially, the IPI-CSR

program encourages and strengthens unity and pride within the CNMI community in the protection of the environment and beautification of the islands. **(PR)**



The San Roque basketball court was the first publicly-frequented facilities that Imperial Pacific's Corporate Social Responsibility team worked on through its "Village Pride Project." **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



Water blasting to remove dirt and ensure the facility will be safe for the community. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



The initial finish shows the facility bright and clean. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



Once the facility is water blasted, fresh coats of paint will also be applied. Several sites/villages have already been identified by IPI-CSR for its "Village Pride Project" this year. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



SISTER CITIES

The sister-city agreement between Tinian and Agat is signed during the 14th annual Pika Festival last Saturday on Tachogna Beach, Tinian. It is considered the first such sister-city agreement between two islands in the Marianas.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA



ADOPT-A-BIN CLEANUP

As part of their adopt-a-bin sponsorship, Bridge Capital LLC had their first of two annual cleanups at their sponsored bin on Mt. Tapochau on Friday, Feb. 23, 2018. A total of 120 lbs of litter was hauled in by the group. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

Second weekend for 'Black Panther' is one of the best ever

NEW YORK (AP)—"Black Panther" scored one of the best second weekends ever with an estimated \$108 million in ticket sales, putting it on track to rank among the highest-grossing blockbusters ever.

Ryan Coogler's Marvel sensation is on a box-office course that few films have managed, according to studio estimates Sunday. It is only the fourth film to earn \$100 million in its second weekend, along with "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" (\$149.2 million), "Jurassic World" (\$106.6 million) and "The Avengers" (\$103.1 million).

Only "The Force Awakens" had a better second weekend than "Black Panther," which dropped 47 percent after its opening weekend of \$201.8 million.

"Black Panther" has grossed \$400 million domestically and \$704 million worldwide in two weeks. The film, starring Chadwick Boseman and Michael B. Jordan, has held even better overseas, where it dropped 42 percent this weekend. Its release in China, the world's second-largest film market, is set for March 9.

"Whatever your projections for 'Black Panther' might be, just increase them by 20 percent and you might be on point," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. "Now the question isn't so much if it gets to \$1 billion, but how far beyond that number does it go."

The results so far put it in the company of "Jurassic World," which ended up grossing \$1.67 billion worldwide, and "The Avengers," which ultimately hauled in \$1.52 billion. Both rank among the top five of all time, not accounting for inflation.

"Black Panther" is spurring a surge for the industry. The overall box office is up 12.5



This image released by Disney and Marvel Studios' shows Chadwick Boseman in a scene from "Black Panther." AP

percent from last year, according to comScore.

And the movie is doing it with an especially diverse audience. This weekend's audience was 33 percent African-American, 37 percent Caucasian, 18 percent Hispanic and 7 percent Asian, according to comScore.

The film's success didn't appear to hurt the handful of new releases.

Faring the best was "Game Night," starring Jason Bateman and Rachel McAdams, from Warner Bros.' New Line. The comedy, which cost about \$37 million to make and was directed by John Francis Daley and Jonathan Goldstein, debuted with \$16.6 million, coming in slightly above forecasts.

Though comedies have struggled at the box office in recent years, "Game Night" got a modest boost from good reviews and perhaps from the waves of moviegoers brought in by "Black Panther."

"It's that whole 'a rising tide floats all boats,'" said Jeff

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers also are included. Final three-day domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"Black Panther,"** \$108 million (\$83.8 million international).
2. **"Game Night,"** \$16.6 million (\$5.2 million international).
3. **"Peter Rabbit,"** \$12.5 million.
4. **"Annihilation,"** \$11 million.
5. **"Fifty Shades Freed,"** \$6.9 million (\$22.3 million international).
6. **"Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle,"** \$5.7 million (\$3 million international).
7. **"The 15:17 to Paris,"** \$3.6 million (\$1.3 million international).
8. **"The Greatest Showman,"** \$3.4 million (\$7.7 million international).
9. **"Every Day,"** \$3.1 million.
10. **"MET Opera: La Boheme,"** \$1.9 million.

Goldstein, distribution head for Warner Bros.

"The whole (comedy) genre is just really troubled," he added. "New Line is, I think, particularly good at teasing these movies out to be the best versions of them. They've had a lot of success in the past, whether it be 'Horrible Boss-

es' or 'Central Intelligence.'"

Alex Garland's sci-fi thriller "Annihilation," starring Natalie Portman, also debuted with some momentum thanks to strong reviews. It opened with \$11 million on about 2,000 screens (or about half the number of "Black Panther").

Paramount earlier sold the

film's international rights (except in China) to Netflix after disappointing reactions in test screenings. Opening weekend audiences largely responded similarly, giving the film a poor C CinemaScore.

It's not uncommon for studios to offload international rights to recoup their costs. But selling an ambitious film from Garland, writer-director of 2015's acclaimed "Ex Machina," to Netflix was seen by some as a sign of diminishing aspirations for a Hollywood major studio.

But Paramount has been behind some of the more artistically audacious releases in recent years, including Darren Aronofsky's "mother!", Alexander Payne's "Downsizing" and Martin Scorsese's "Silence."

"Annihilation," an unusually challenging and psychedelic sci-fi release for a major studio, cost about \$40 million to produce. It's among the last releases green-lit by previous Paramount head Brad Grey. Jim Gianopulos took over as chief executive and chairman last year, and he is pushing a more franchise-focused agenda.

Kyle Davies, Paramount's domestic distribution chief, declined to comment on the Netflix deal but said he was pleased with the film's performance.

"Alex is a very talented filmmaker, and he's created this mind-bending experience," Davies said. "And I think there's going to be a lot of chatter and a lot of buzz that will propel the movie into the spring moviegoing season."

Also opening was the micro-budget young adult romance "Every Day," the first release from Metro Goldwyn Mayer's rebooted Orion Pictures. The film, which cost less than \$5 million to make, debuted with \$3.1 million in ticket sales.

Michelle Obama to release memoir in November

NEW YORK (AP)—Michelle Obama's memoir, one of the most highly anticipated books in recent years, is coming out Nov. 13.

The former first lady tweeted Sunday that the book, to come out a week after the 2018 midterm elections, is called "Becoming." By Sunday night, her memoir was in the top 20 on Amazon.com.

"Writing 'Becoming' has been a deeply personal experience," she said in a statement. "It has allowed me, for the very first time, the space to honestly reflect on the unexpected trajectory of my life. In this book, I talk about my roots and how a little girl from the South Side of Chicago found her voice and developed the strength to use it to empower others. I hope my journey inspires readers to find the courage to become whoever they aspire to be. I can't wait to share my story."

She and her husband, former President Barack Obama, last year reached a joint agreement with Penguin Random House for their respective books. The deal is believed to be well in excess of \$30 million. "Becoming" will be released in the U.S. through the Crown Publishing Group, a Penguin Random House division that has published works by both Obamas.

Memoirs by former first ladies usually sell well, with notable works including Laura Bush's "Spoken from the Heart" and Hillary Rodham Clinton's "Living History." Michelle Obama's memoir is expected to be a major commercial and cultural event. She is admired around the world and has never told her story at length. Her only previous book was a 2012 work on gardening, "American Grown."

The book will be published simultaneously in 24 languages, from Swedish to Arabic, and Michelle Obama expects to promote "Becoming" in the U.S. and overseas. She will also narrate the audio version. According to Crown, Obama is working with a team of assistants, but that every word in the finished text will be hers.

"As first lady of the United States of America—the first African-American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world," Crown said in a statement.

Hard Rock casino to flood Atlantic City with live music

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—Atlantic City's newest casino promises to flood the city with live music.

The music-themed Hard Rock casino opening this summer promises to become an East Coast musical mecca, with over 200 nights of live music in its first year.

The global gambling, entertainment and resort company is also enlarging the concert venue at the former Trump Taj Mahal to fit 7,000 seats, up from the 5,200 it formerly held.

Jim Allen, CEO of Hard Rock International and a veteran Atlantic City casino executive, promised an audience last week at a local church that the new casino will offer more

live music than Atlantic City has ever seen.

"When's the first time someone has done 200 shows in Atlantic City?" he asked. "When's the last time you saw entertainment on a night other than Saturday in Atlantic City? We're going to make that commitment."

By comparison, the nearly 15,000-seat Boardwalk Hall hosted 11 big-name concerts last year, in addition to stage shows and non-musical events. The musical offerings of individual casinos—and their frequency—vary widely, with most restricted to weekends.

Rummy Pandit, executive director of the Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality

& Tourism at New Jersey's Stockton University, said Hard Rock's entertainment schedule will expand Atlantic City's appeal.

"Bringing entertainment into the city mid-week at off-peak times will be a particularly persuasive reason for visitors to consider extending their stay," he said. "Turning a two-night weekend stay into a long weekend or mid-week getaway can make a huge difference for Atlantic City's lodging, food and beverage, retail, gaming and tourism businesses."

The director of the Center for gaming Research at the University of Nevada Las Vegas said having a diverse lineup will lure more people.

"If people get into the habit of visiting Atlantic City for live music, they may continue to do so," David Schwartz said.

Hard Rock boasts the world's largest collection of music memorabilia, some of which has already made its way into the still unfinished Atlantic City facility. Items include a dress worn by Mariah Carey, a jumpsuit worn by Whitney Houston and an acoustic guitar autographed by Jon Bon Jovi.

Even the casino's business cards have a musical theme. At the top of each one is the phrase, "Please allow me to introduce myself," the opening line from the Rolling Stones' classic "Sympathy For The Devil." Employee

name tags are in the shape of guitar picks.

Allen said the live shows will range from top A-list performers in the Mark Etes Arena (Hard Rock is keeping the name of the venue in honor of the former Trump executive who died in a helicopter crash before it opened) to clubs or smaller performance spaces inside the casino.

And despite the ubiquitous guitars, it won't be only rock 'n' roll. Allen promises a diverse musical mix for every taste.

"You're looking at the person who just signed Jay-Z and Beyoncé to play Hard Rock Stadium" in Miami, he told an audience at the New Shiloh Baptist Church last week.

Winfrey praises Florida students as 'warriors of the light'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Oprah Winfrey has nothing but praise for the Florida school shooting survivors who have channeled angst into activism, calling them "warriors of the light" and comparing them to civil rights pioneers.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday, Winfrey drew parallels be-

tween the teens and the Freedom Riders of the 1960s, who rode buses into southern states in protest of racial segregation. Winfrey called the Parkland students' protests for gun control "a proud moment."

"It's an evolving moment for our country. The same thing happened, as you know, back in the '50s and '60s for the civil rights movement," Winfrey said. "Young people said, 'We will not tolerate what our ancestors have tolerated. We have had enough and we're willing to fight for it and willing to march in the streets for it and, if necessary, die for it.'"

Winfrey spoke while promoting the upcoming film "A Wrinkle in Time," directed by Ava DuVernay and featuring her, Reese Witherspoon and Mindy Kaling. The film is adapted from Madeleine L'Engle's science-fiction fantasy novel.

"These young people get



AP
In this Jan. 7, 2018, file photo, Oprah Winfrey poses in the press room with the Cecil B. DeMille Award at the 75th annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif.

las High School that left 17 people dead has sparked calls for walkouts, sit-ins and other actions on school campuses across the U.S.

Winfrey also again reacted to President Donald Trump's recent tweeting about her in which he called her "very insecure."

"Nobody wants to be hate-tweeted, especially by the president," said Winfrey. "So it's not a comfortable thing I think for anybody on social media who's had somebody say something about you that you didn't feel was true. But I believe that you meet any kind of negativity in your life, that you meet it with light."

to be literally warriors of the light," Winfrey said. "That's what they're trying to do. They're trying to—through their voices, through the March For Our Lives—say 'We will

not let this happen again. We are going to do what we can to banish the darkness.'"

The former talk show host last week matched a \$500,000 donation by George and Amal

Clooney to the students' planned marches, including one on March 24 in Washington, D.C.

The Feb. 14 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Doug-

'The Post' renews attention for Pentagon Papers ruling

NEW YORK (AP)—Steven Spielberg's Oscar-nominated "The Post" has revived interest in the newspaper battles of the 1970s, the lives of Washington Post publisher Katharine Graham and executive Ben Bradlee and the risks of publishing the top-secret documents known as "The Pentagon Papers."

It also brought attention, however brief, to one of the country's signature First Amendment rulings: The New York Times Co. v. United States was a 6-3 decision in 1971 rejecting the Nixon administration's argument that releasing the Pentagon Papers endangered national security. Much of the movie focuses on the Washington

Post's decision to publish the papers after a federal court injunction against the Times, which broke the story.

The ruling serves as the victorious climax to the press's battle against the government. And nearly a half-century later, the decision remains a major landmark in the history of freedom of the press.

"The decision powerfully reaffirms that even the most important government interests (such as national security) generally can't justify suppressing factual reporting, and courts have repeatedly cited it for that proposition," said Eugene Volokh, a professor of law at UCLA and a former Supreme Court

clerk. "The decision also makes clear that courts generally aren't allowed to issue injunctions restraining speech."

The Pentagon Papers came out during a relatively liberal on the court, although it was becoming more conservative since the departure of Chief Justice Earl Warren in 1969. Warren Burger, who succeeded Warren, was a Nixon appointee determined to roll back the alleged excesses of the Warren court. And the resignation of Abe Fortas led to the appointment of Harry Blackmun, who became a prominent liberal but was initially aligned with his fellow Minnesotan Burger, the so-called "Minnesota Twins."

One of the counsels for the Times, Floyd Abrams, said he was confident that he had the votes from four justices: Hugo Black, William Brennan, Thurgood Marshall and William O. Douglas. Abrams and co-counsel Alexander Bickel hoped to win over Justices Potter Stewart and Byron White.

"We were well aware as the oral argument in the case commenced that four votes would all but surely be in favor the Times," Abrams told the AP in a recent email. "(But) we did indeed think the ruling could be a close one and that victory was by no means assured."

The Pentagon Papers were commissioned by the defense

department in 1967 to provide a history of the country's involvement in Vietnam. One of the contributors, Daniel Ellsberg, had become disillusioned with the war and saw the study as a chance to show how the public had been deceived for years by the government. Ellsberg leaked what became known as the Pentagon Papers to the Times, which published its first report on June 13, 1971. After the Nixon administration obtained an injunction in federal court, the Post and other newspapers published their own accounts. The Supreme Court agreed to hear the case of the Times vs. the government on June 26.

Wife's desire for motherhood grows stronger as years pass

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are 15 years apart in age. We have been together for six years, married a year and a half. He is my entire world, my best friend and soul mate.

When we first met, he told me he didn't think he wanted another child (he has a daughter). I learned to accept it if I wanted to be with him. I had to be OK with being a stepmom and not having a child of my own.

Fast-forward: It's six years later. His daughter (now 14) no longer comes around. (The ex-wife discouraged any relationship between my stepdaughter and me.) I'm finding it harder and harder to cope with the fact that I don't have a child of my own. When I bring this up to my husband, he tells me, "I told you in the beginning I didn't think I wanted another child."

How do I deal with this? It's breaking my heart because she is not around anymore and I don't feel like a mom of any sort.

LONGING TO BE A MOM

DEAR LONGING: Tell your husband that in the beginning when he told you he didn't think he wanted another child, you agreed because you thought you could accept it, but that as time has gone by, you no longer can. Then tell him you feel an important part of being a woman is being a mother. If he refuses to relent, then as much as you may love him, you may be married to the

wrong man, and you will have to move on if you need to follow your biological imperative.

DEAR ABBY: Can you please educate your readers about supermarket etiquette? Every time I buy groceries, I encounter people who push or park their carts in the middle of the aisle with no consideration for other shoppers. I also see them blindly blast through intersections in the aisles and barely avoid colliding with each other.

A few weeks ago, I said to a gentleman, "Pardon me, may I go around you? Thank you." He responded that I was the first person who had ever said that to him! I'm surprised there aren't more cases of road rage in supermarkets.

My suggestion: Why don't we follow basic traffic rules in the supermarket? For example, stay to the right unless you are passing. Yield at intersections to the shopper on the right, etc. Abby, what do you think? Also, what's your take on big kids riding in the grocery carts?

DISGUSTED SHOPPER IN ILLINOIS

DEAR DISGUSTED: What you describe happens when folks fail to consider how their behavior affects others. When someone blocks the aisle with a grocery cart, the logical way to deal with it is to say, "Excuse me, please," which alerts the "offender" that there are others in the store be-

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

sides him or her.

Your suggestion that shoppers observe basic traffic rules is a good one—particularly when it involves observing the speed limit. Charging through the intersections of the aisles could cause an accident in which another shopper is harmed.

As to "big kids" riding in shopping carts, as long as they aren't bothering other shoppers and the store doesn't care, I mind my own business and don't judge.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Clothing, informally
5 Actor
8 Modern taxi rival
12 Grad
13 Altar affirmative
14 "The Lion King"
15 Turkish money
16 Kind of call
18 Parlor pieces
20 Buenos —
21 Decks in the ring
22 Candle count
23 Beethoven's "Für —"
26 Reunion attendees
30 "The Matrix" role
31 Web address
32 Spy org.
33 Nation
36 Doo-hickey
38 Ages and ages

DOWN

39 Goat's plaint
40 Sufficient
43 Cleared one's throat
47 Favor-asker's plea
49 Type of dancer
50 Mata —
51 Boom times
52 Corporate symbol
53 French 101 verb
54 Actress West
55 Ancient Dead Sea land
1 Body powder

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-27

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Hayley Williams, 29; Gerard Depardieu, 69; Cokie Roberts, 74; John Amos, 78.

Happy Birthday: Reflection and hard work will be necessary this year. Consider what you have done in the past and how you can use your experience and know-how to avoid making the same mistakes over and over again. Don't get down when all you need to do is hone your skills and make them work more efficiently. Your numbers are 2, 14, 18, 23, 35, 39, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Anything related to work should be handled carefully. Take care of your responsibilities without complaint. An emotional reaction will make you look bad and lead to an impulsive move. Do your best to get along with others. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be direct if you have a problem. Being honest and asking questions are the best ways to get to the bottom of any situation that leaves you feeling uncertain. Peace and love will help resolve issues, but complaining won't. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Stick to what you know and steer clear of anyone who shows inconsistency or unpredictable tendencies. Stay grounded and stick to whatever commitments you have made. Use common sense and offer honest answers. ****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A shopping trip will lead to a bargain that will improve your domestic environment. Make romance a priority and make plans to enjoy

being with the people who make you happy. Personal improvements are featured. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Make a change at work or to your status and reputation. Consider what you enjoy doing most and look for ways to use your skills, experience or knowledge to help you head in a direction that excites you. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Consider the adjustments you can make to the way you live. Consider how you can apply the knowledge you have gained in the past to future prospects. A change of location or updating your skills will help you move forward. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Refuse to let individuals who don't share your opinion get a rise out of you. Nurture the relationships that are most important to you. The quality of your interactions with others will depend on your frame of mind. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't venture too far from home. It's important to focus inward and reflect on the plans and promises you've made. Do whatever it takes to stabilize your relationships with those you care about before moving forward. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): A bargain is not worth it if you have to incur debt. Changes can be made that are cost-efficient and will allow you to save rather than spend. Common sense and the ability to say "no" will be in your best interest. **

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Emotions will swell up when dealing with friends or relatives who know how to get a rise out of you. Stop and think before you take the bait and you'll come up with a much better way to handle such encounters. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't leave anything to chance. Getting your personal papers and documentation in order will be necessary before the year comes to a close. Don't let anyone take you for granted. Look for a way to reach your professional goals. ****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Offer suggestions, but don't take over. You'll be blamed for interfering if you are too eager to tell others what to do. Misunderstandings are apparent. Personal growth should be your focus, not trying to change others. ***

Birthday Baby: You are productive, imaginative and opportunistic. You are innovative and changeable.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

9 3 8

5 7

8 2 7 6

4 7 9 4 6

8 6 5

6 4 1 7

5 8 3

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2 9 4 7 6 3 8 1 5

5 3 8 2 1 9 7 4 6

6 7 1 5 4 8 3 2 9

8 1 5 9 3 2 4 6 7

9 2 6 4 7 5 1 8 3

3 4 7 1 8 6 5 9 2

4 8 2 3 9 7 6 5 1

7 6 9 8 5 1 2 3 4

1 5 3 6 2 4 9 7 8

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/27 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

Solution: 11 letters

N L B E E S S A Y Y A R R U M

O A I O I E N N A T N A L T A

S I C T O N G E D U C A T O R

D T O I A K N E F U N D I N G

I N M F R L E A K H C A E T A

V E P P A E I R F S T A M P R

A D R O G L M A E T U C A R E

D I O R A U S A F D R T I R T

O S M T I E P R N E A A V E S

M E I I N R E O H A R E I D I

I R S A L N E T T J C R L N V

N P E A E E C A I N A I O U I

A J C T M S H R M I A N R O T

N G R A N T N O S U G R E F C

T L F A D V I S O R O H T U A

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Activist, Advisor, African-American, Anna, Atlanta, Author, Booker, Care, Compromise, Davidson, Dominant, Educator, Ernest, Essay, Fame, Fannie, Ferguson, Founder, Funding, Goal, Grant, Jane, Jeanes, Leader, Margaret, Murray, Niagara, Olivia, Orator, Portia, Presidential, Smith, Speech, Stamp, Taliaferro, Teach, Train, Tuskegee
Yesterday's Answer: Broad Street
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Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Petitioners Huang,
Xiu Fang and Zeng, Jin Dong

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME OF ZENG, XIN YUE, A Minor Child,
By: HUANG, XIU FANG and ZENG, JIN DONG, Petitioners

FCD-CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0061
NOTICE OF HEARING ON VERIFIED PETITIONER FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Judge: Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio
Date: March 19, 2018
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Courtroom: 217A

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 19, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 23rd day of February, 2018.

/s/
Clerk of Court
Deputy Clerk of Court

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

REMIGIO N. NELMIDA Petitioner, vs. SOLEDAD MADRIGAL NELMIDA Respondent,

FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0012
SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 8032 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2018.
/s/
Clerk of Court

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Articles of Dissolution of U.S. - Saipan Around the World, Inc. a Corporation established and operating in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, has been filed with the CNMI Registrar of Corporation on this 26th of February 2018. Pursuant thereto, all creditors and persons with claim against the corporation are hereby notified to present their respective claim in writing to the corporation at the address set forth below:

U.S.-Saipan
Around the World, Inc.
P.O. Box 503609
Saipan, MP 96950
All claims not filed within the time required by law will forever be barred.

/s/ CHEN, HONGCHAO
Secretary
Dated this 26th of February, 2018.

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Neymar injured ahead of PSG-Real Madrid duel

PARIS (AP)—Neymar went off on a stretcher after twisting his right ankle late in league leader Paris Saint-Germain's 3-0 victory against Marseille on Sunday.

The Brazil striker was taken off with 10 minutes remaining, after going in for a challenge on Marseille defender Bouna Sarr.

PSG coach Unai Emery is hopeful that Neymar will recover in time for the Champions League game against Real Madrid on March 6. PSG trails 3-1 from the first leg in the last 16.

"The first tests revealed a twist. We will do further tests," Emery said. "For the match against Real, if I had to say 'yes or no' right now, I'd say yes."

Neymar had his head in his hands and appeared tearful as he was taken off. His standing leg jarred as he lost balance and the weight of his body went onto his ankle, which briefly buckled under him.

"Of course I'm worried about Neymar," PSG goalkeeper Alphonse Areola said. "His ankle was quite swollen. He's an important player for us and I hope he comes back quickly."

PSG's game against fierce rival Marseille was heated, especially in the second half, with cheap challenges from both teams and 11 yellow cards—six of them for the hosts.

"We were solid and we tried to control the game," PSG captain Thiago Silva said. "It's a shame that we lost an



AP
PSG's Neymar lies on the pitch after being fouled during the Champions League soccer match, round of 16, 1st leg between Real Madrid and Paris Saint Germain at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain, Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018.

equalizer for local rival Saint-Etienne in a 1-1 draw.

Debuchy, a recent signing from Premier League Arsenal, was left unmarked inside the penalty area to steer in a shot off the post from Remy Cabella's left-wing cross.

Lyon has only two points from the past five games—conceding 11 goals—and the club's hopes of securing a top-three finish and a place in next season's Champions League are fading fast. Fourth-place Lyon is five points behind third-place Marseille.

A brilliantly executed goal from striker Mariano Diaz, his 15th of the season, gave Lyon a 19th-minute lead. He chested down a long pass from Brazilian defender Marcelo with his back to goal, flicked the ball around a defender with his right foot and then regained his balance before adroitly clipping it with his left past goalkeeper Stephane Ruffier.

The two teams are bitter rivals with 17 league titles between them, including a French-record 10 for Saint-Etienne. But Lyon has been the superior team for many years, winning seven titles from 2002-08.

important player (Neymar) at the end."

The win moved PSG 14 points clear of second-place Monaco, with only 11 games left. Marseille is two points further back in third.

PSG's first two goals stemmed from Marseille's mistakes at the back.

In the 10th minute, PSG right back Dani Alves' pass behind the defense was easily read by left back Jordan Ama-

vi. But rather than clearing the ball properly, his soft sliding tackle knocked it to Kylian Mbappe, who skipped past another defender before drilling a low shot into the bottom right corner.

The second goal came from the other side, as midfielder Adrien Rabiot broke down the left and his cross found Neymar, whose side-footed pass

was turned into his own net by center half Jorge Rolando in the 28th.

PSG's third in the 56th owed nothing to fortune, as Cavani expertly controlled Neymar's pass from the left with the inside of his foot, easily turned Rolando and smacked in a powerful shot past goalkeeper Yann M. Pen. for his league-leading 24th of the season.

Mbappe shook his head disapprovingly when substituted, with winger Angel Di Maria replacing him for the last 30 minutes.

Marseille threatened mainly from midfielder Dimitri Payet's laser-like free kicks, but no one could get on the end of them.

Meanwhile, Lyon's poor defending cost the team once again as right back Mathieu Debuchy scored a last-minute



MINNESOTA (AP)—

Twins are adding some pop to their playoff team from last year, landing free agent slugger Logan Morrison for the lineup.

Morrison and the Twins have agreed to a \$6.5 million, one-year contract, according to a person with knowledge of the deal. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Sunday because the agreement was subject to a physical and had not been finalized.

The Twins would have an option for 2019 that could vest automatically, making it a two-year deal.

Either way, their patience in a slow-moving market this winter has the Twins on the cusp of scoring Morrison, who's coming off a career-high 38 home runs and 85 RBI for the Tampa Bay Rays in 2017.

Morrison was drafted by the Marlins and debuted in 2010. He was traded to Seattle prior to the 2014 season, then dealt to the Rays two years later.

Morrison played in a career-most 149 games last sea-

Twins agree to \$6.5M contract with Morrison

son and posted an .868 OPS, which would have been tops on the Twins. He broke in as

a corner outfielder but became a regular at first base in 2013, his last year with the Marlins.

With Eddie Rosario in left field, Max Kepler in right and Joe Mauer at first base for the

Twins, Morrison is on track to be the primary designated hitter for a team that earned

an AL wild card last season. Robbie Grossman and Kennys Vargas are the Minnesota holdovers who saw the most time at DH in 2017, but their production didn't match what Morrison did for the Rays.

"Everybody knows he can hit, so we're excited to have anybody like that with that kind of power in the lineup, for sure," Twins pitcher Kyle Gibson said after his exhibition start against the Rays in Fort Myers, Florida. "That's only going to make us a deeper team and a better team."

The Twins have quietly added several veterans to an up-and-coming club, beginning with relievers Fernando Rodney, Addison Reed and Zach Duke. They traded for starting pitcher Jake Odorizzi and signed another candidate for the rotation in Anibal Sanchez before reaching the agreement with Morrison.

The Twins pre-emptively cleared a spot on the 40-man roster by placing reliever J.T. Chargois on waivers. Chargois, who pitched in 25 games for Minnesota in 2016, was claimed by the Los Angeles Dodgers on Friday.

A-Rod remains with Yankees as special adviser

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Five years after claiming the Yankees were trying to run him out of baseball, Alex Rodriguez is remaining with New York as a revered elder statesman.

New York said Sunday that A-Rod will be a special adviser.

"I think he has a lot to offer," new Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "Hopefully it's an opportunity for him to impact our team. I think everyone understands just how smart of a baseball mind he is and his ability I think to communicate that sometimes is really something he's special at, especially with the younger guys."

When Rodriguez retired in August 2016 during a season-long slump, he agreed to serve as an adviser and

instructor for the remainder of his \$275 million, 10-year contract. Rodriguez spent a few days each year working with prospects, and when that deal expired at the end of last season he spoke with owner Hal Steinbrenner about remaining in some role.

Nick Swisher also was added as a special adviser, joining Reggie Jackson and Hideki Matsui.

Jackson says the 42-year-old Rodriguez could have an on-field future if he wants to.

"Alex is a real student of the game. I think he's got the ability to manage. I think he's got those skills. It's a good place for him to learn," Jackson said. "I think he wants to own."

Rodriguez, who is replacing Boone as an ESPN ana-

lyst on Sunday night telecasts, claimed in 2013 the Yankees' medical staff mishandled his hip injury. A-Rod had surgery and missed most of the season. He returned and was suspended for all of 2014 for violations of baseball's drug agreement and labor contract.

"These are exciting times for the New York Yankees, and I do not take this opportunity for granted," Rodriguez said in a statement. "I am genuinely thankful for the trust the organization has placed in me, and I am looking forward to lending whatever support or expertise is needed of me."

Jackson is excited about adding Giancarlo Stanton to Aaron Judge in the Yankees' lineup.

"You see two twin tow-

ers, man, getting off the bus, it's something to look at," Jackson said. "We'll sell out some batting practices and we'll run out of balls once in a while, but it'll be fun for everybody."

His message to media is "put the heat on," and his advice to Stanton is simply: "Play good."

"It'll be fun in spring training," he said. "And it will be work the first month. They'll want to know why he didn't hit a homer the first day. Look, he's been around it, last year when he's trying to hit 60 and last year he's trying to hit 50. There was some pressure in there. Miami's not New York, but he'll be fine and he's surrounded with the right group, the right people, the right guys."

Spurs snap 4-game losing skid, down Cavaliers



CLEVELAND (AP)—LaMarcus Aldridge scored 27 points, Danny Green added 22 and the San Antonio Spurs ended their annual “rodeo” road trip by beating the Cleveland Cavaliers 110-94 on Sunday to snap a four-game losing streak.

Green, who missed Friday’s loss at Denver with food poisoning, came off the bench for the first time in 49 games this season. He made five 3-pointers to provide a perfect outside complement to Aldridge’s dynamic inside game. Dejounte Murray added 13 points and nine rebounds for San Antonio, a team not accustomed to any turmoil.

But the Spurs have not been themselves lately while playing without star Kawhi Leonard. They had dropped six of seven and four in a row on a trip (their arena hosts a rodeo every year) that coach Gregg Popovich’s squad typically uses as a spring board into the playoffs.

LeBron James had 33 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists for the Cavs, who fell to 3-2 since overhauling their roster with three trades.

Cleveland was within two points after three, but the Spurs scored the first 10 of the fourth and made all the necessary plays down the stretch to pull off the impressive win.

Kyle Korver’s 3-pointer with 4:47 left brought the Cavs within 96-88, but Patty Mills countered with a 3 for the Spurs.

Cavs coach Tyronn Lue has spent most of the season adjusting his lineups and rotations, and he may have to do some more tweaking after starters Cedi Osman, J.R. Smith, George Hill and Tristan Thompson shot a combined 6 of 28. Cleveland has to find a dependable No. 2 option on offense while All-Star Kevin Love recovers from a broken hand.

Before the game, Popovich joked that it’s easy to become entranced against James.

“I just have to make sure that I don’t just stare at him all night like I did when I first came in the league and played the Bulls. I’d just watch Michael (Jordan) the whole time and Larry Brown would elbow me like, ‘You going to do something?’ I said, ‘Coach, I’ve got to watch. I’ve got to see this guy.’”

James dazzled in the first half scoring 17 points with seven rebounds and five assists.

Cleveland built a nine-point lead, but Green dropped a pair of 3-pointers and the Spurs pulled even at 50-all before James hit a 3 in the final second.



Rockets 119, Nuggets 114

In Denver, James Harden had 41 points and eight rebounds, Chris Paul scored 23 points and Houston beat Denver for its 12th straight victory.

Harden had 27 in the first half and seven in the fourth quarter, when the Rockets held off a late Denver rally. Harden has scored 40 or more points nine times this season. He finished with seven assists.

Nikola Jokic had 21 points and 14 rebounds for Denver, which had its four-game winning streak snapped. Will Barton added 25 points.

The Rockets are 21-4 since Dec. 29 and own the best record (46-13) in the NBA. They are outscoring teams by an average of 12.5 points during the 12-game winning streak. The five-point win Sunday was their closest game during the streak.

Pelicans 123, Bucks 121, OT

In Milwaukee, Jrue Holiday scored 28 of his 36 points after halftime to lead New Orleans over Milwaukee in overtime.

Holiday added nine rebounds and six assists for New Orleans, which held on for its season-high fifth win in a row when Jason Terry’s 3-pointer was ruled after the buzzer.

Anthony Davis, who entered the game as the league’s third-leading scorer (27.7 ppg), added 27 points and 13 rebounds.

The Pelicans trailed by 18 early in the second half but outscored Milwaukee 38-19

in the third quarter.

Khris Middleton scored 25 points for the Bucks. Giannis Antetokounmpo, the No. 2 scorer in the NBA (27.8) and Eric Bledsoe each added 20, but the Bucks lost for only the fourth time in the last 14 games and fell to 9-26 all-

time against New Orleans.

Wizards 109, 76ers 94

In Washington, Otto Porter scored 24 points, Bradley Beal added 23 and Washington had a dominant second quarter in a victory over Philadelphia.

Kelly Oubre scored 16 of

his 19 points in the first half to help fourth-place Washington move a half-game ahead of Indiana in the Eastern Conference standings.

The Wizards improved to 9-3 in an extended stretch without All-Star point guard John Wall (knee surgery).

Thomas delivers Tiger-like shots to win Honda Classic

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—Justin Thomas is another young player that Tiger Woods has brought into his golfing circle, not only spending time with him but sharing some of his experience that led to 79 victories on the PGA Tour.

As recently as last week at Riviera, when Thomas was within range of the lead going into the final round, he said Woods sent him a text to dispense some advice and wish him well. That changed on the eve of the final round of the Honda Classic.

“Got crickets last night,” Thomas said with a laugh.

That’s because Woods was playing, and he was playing well.

Just not as good as Thomas.

Thomas delivered a moment that so many times belonged to Woods on Sunday. He was tied for the lead with Luke List on the par-5 18th at PGA National, with List already on the green and some 35 feet away for eagle while Thomas had to lay up from the rough.

He needed a birdie to have any chance of a playoff, and his gap wedge from 117 yards was so pure that it rolled 6

inches by the cup and settled 2 feet away.

“I have a lot of confidence in my wedge game,” Thomas said. “I knew if I got a decent number that I was going to be able to get inside 10 feet. That’s all I wanted was a chance to try to get into a playoff. And then ended up hitting a great wedge.”

Given a second chance in a sudden-death playoff with his 2-under 68, the 24-year-old Thomas came through with another clutch shot. This one was a 5-wood over the water on the 18th, toward a bunker. Thomas barked at the ball to go a little further, just to be safe.

“It was getting pretty dark to where I couldn’t see it, and as sad as it is, all I was looking at was the water to see if it splashed,” Thomas said. “And it didn’t. So I figured I was in the bunker, and then people started clapping and I could kind of see some little white dot on the green.”

That effectively was the winning shot.

List, who shot a bogey-free 32 on the back nine for a 69, went wide right in a rare

miss off the tee Sunday. He had few options except to go left near the grandstands, and from there he hit a superb shot to 25 feet to at least have a chance at birdie. He ran it by 6 feet, made par, and then watched Thomas two-putt for birdie and the win.

“Hell of a battle out there,” Thomas said.

He now has won for the second time this season on the PGA Tour, both times in a playoff. The other was the CJ Cup in South Korea. Thomas now has eight career victories, seven of them in his last 31 starts on tour. He moves to No. 3 in the world, significant only because he now is one spot ahead of longtime friend Jordan Spieth for the first time in their careers. Except that Thomas doesn’t think it’s all that significant.

“Not really,” he said. “Because there’s still two more spots that I want to climb.”

List was trying for his first victory, and he hit all the right shots after consecutive bogeys on the front nine. His only regret was missing the 18th fairway in the playoff, knowing that a birdie would

San Antonio Spurs’ Patty Mills, center, drives between Cleveland Cavaliers’ Jeff Green, left, and Kyle Korver in the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018, in Cleveland.

Joel Embiid had 25 points and 10 rebounds for Philadelphia, which dropped a half-game behind Milwaukee into seventh place and two back of Washington in the congested East standings.

Hornets 114, Pistons 98

In Charlotte, Dwight Howard had 17 points and 12 rebounds, Kemba Walker added 17 points and Charlotte beat Detroit for its season-best fourth straight win.

The Hornets improved to 27-33 while making a push toward the No. 8 seed in the Eastern Conference for the playoffs. The Pistons have 28 wins, and there are eight teams in the conference with at least 31 victories.

Seven Charlotte players scored in double digits, and the Hornets’ bench outscored Detroit’s reserves 51-28.

Blake Griffin led the Pistons with 20 points on 10-for-18 shooting, while Andre Drummond had 14 points and 14 rebounds. Detroit has lost five of six.

be required to win.

“This one is going to sting a little bit,” List said. “But I found a restored passion for what I do out here. I gave it my best effort on every shot.”

As for Woods?

He is at the stage in his comeback from a fourth back surgery that even finishing eight shots behind can be considered progress. Woods pulled to within three shots when he made an 8-foot birdie putt on No. 8, but that was only for a brief moment before Thomas rapped in a short birdie putt -- set up by another great wedge—on the par-5 third hole.

Woods again was done in by the “Bear’s Trap,” a stretch of holes at the end that feature a pair of par 3s over the water. For the second time this week, he came up short and into the water on the 15th hole and made double bogey. For the second time this week, he three-putted the 16th from long range for bogey.

Woods wound up with a 70 and finished 12th.

“I made a big leap this week because I really hit it well,” Woods said. “I was able to control it, especially in this wind, which is not easy to do.”

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seven pairs were crowned champions as badminton action returned over the weekend with the Northern Marianas Badminton Association organizing the 12th Year Badminton Tournament at the TSL Sports Complex.

Ichiro Borja, Windy Fernandez, and Irish Pagarao gained two titles each in the doubles events to lead the list of winners in NMBA's inaugural tournament for the year that was sponsored by TanHoldings.

Ichiro teamed up with older brother Taka in ruling the men's CC division as they posted a 15-21, 21-14, 11-4 win over the tandem of Tommy Kim and Vince Reyes. The younger Borja then partnered with Irish Pagarao in clinching the mixed doubles CC title following their 21-19, 21-12 decision over his brother and Lanie Santos in Sunday's finale.

Pagarao earlier won the women's BC crown when she teamed up with Vilma Reyes in completing a masterful 21-8, 21-5 triumph against Merlie Tolentino and Carline Sablan.

Sablan bounced back in the

NMBA crowns champs in first tourney



Northern Marianas Badminton Association president Merlie Tolentino, standing eighth left, joins other board members and winners of last Sunday's NMBA 12th Year Badminton Tournament at the TSL Sports Complex.

women's CC division finals, as she paired up with Yoko Borja in beating Pagarao and Julia Espino, 21-12, 21-16.

Fernandez played in the mixed doubles event, first joining Joseph Torres in claiming the AB division crown following their 21-15, 21-14 finals win over

the pair of Riman and Loyda Ito. Fernandez then added the BB title, teaming up with Eric Pena in completing a 21-10, 21-15 triumph over Ito and Eydie Uy.

Riman was victorious in the men's BB division and togeth-



er with Brian Valenton they downed Pena and Oh Im Bog in the finals, 21-9, 21-14.

NMBA followed a knockout system format instead of the usual round-robin play and its president Tolentino said that the tournament was part of their preparation for the 2021 Pacific Mini Games that Saipan will be hosting.



Jeff Riman stretches as he tries to keep the shuttlecock in play in one of their games with partner Brian Valenton in the men's BB division of the NMBA 12th Year Badminton Tournament held over the weekend at the TSL Sports Complex.

"We need the players, especially the youth, to get accustomed to the knockout format. Some tournaments in other places are one-and-done," said Tolentino.

She added that they are looking for youngsters who are interested in learning the sport. Tolentino said youth players would undergo train-

ing with veteran players who are eligible to play for the CNMI in the Mini Games three years from now.

"We still have time to prepare our CNMI team for the Mini Games," the NMBA head said.

Interested youth can get in touch with any NMBA officer at the badminton gym for more information.

Roil Soil leads SEDA A division

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Jonny's Roil Soil had an easy outing against the lowly Franken Drunken Warriors, 13-4, in the A division of the Saipan Electronic Darts Association-Bud Light League 2018.

The Roil Soil, behind K.J. Villagomez's flawless game, jumped to a 6-0 lead after the Singles Regular Cricket and Partners 701 events. The Drunken Warriors got on the board in the Singles Half-It with Jeff Pangelinan edging Carter Calma in one of the three wins they collected. James Tudela and Alex Castro scored the other wins in the Singles Half-It, while George Cruz gave the Drunken Warriors their fourth victory in the Singles 501.

The win improved the Roil

Soil's standing to 24-10, while the 6JMS Terminator is not far behind at 22-12, and its sister squad Destroyers and Mafia I tied at third place with similar 19-15 records.

Amari's Gunners (17-17), 6JMS 101 Proofers (17-17), Naked Fish Ridin'Darry (16-18), 6JMS Scorpions (14-20), 6JMS Predators (11-23), and Drunken Warriors (11-23) complete the standings.

In other games held at the various bars on Saipan last week, the Terminator cruised to a 12-5 win over the Predators, while the Darryty completed a 10-7 decision over the Gunners. The 101 Proofers also scored a 10-7 win against the Scorpions, while the Destroyers edged the Mafia, 9-8.

MASTERS

■ Nakayoshi 10, Proofers 7

■ Pythons 9, Mafia 8

TUESDAY B

■ Mafia 14, Empty 1
■ Terminator 9, Strikers 6
■ Petmalu 9, Thunder Darts 6

C DIVISION

■ Bulldogs 11, Re-Darts 4
■ Bulls Hitters 10, Wettside 5
■ Bull-It 9, Werpa 6
■ Dart Vaders 8, River Shots 7

FANIHI B

■ Darty Minded 11, Bandits 4
■ Mafia 11, Proofers 4
■ Pung Pang 11, Desaten 4
■ Shaka 8, Drunken Warriors 7

FLAME THREE B

■ Na'Gupu 10, Jump It 5
■ Boardmembers 9, Dartaholics 6
■ Kyodai 9, Serial Killaz 6
■ Real Deal 9, Creepers 6
■ Ridin'Darry 9, Drillers 6

BANK

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Greg Perez pitched 2 1/5 innings in start with one hit, three strikeouts, and two walks. Wesley went 2-for-2 with two doubles, a run, and an RBI for Bank of Saipan, while Tydingco scored twice on a 2-for-3 performance at the plate.

McDonald's 9, Cubs 3

Dylan Santos threw a complete game in leading McDonald's past the Cubs. The lefty pitcher surrendered one earned run on four hits and had 11 strikeouts and one walk.

He also had plenty of de-

fensive help with an inning-ending double play at the bottom of the third serving as the highlight of the match.

Quin Palacios, leading off for the Cubs in the third, got on base on an interference play and advanced on a passed ball. Sebastian Saito struck out, while Kiku Delos Santos flied out with McDonald's center fielder Frankie Eriich making the catch for out No. 2. Eriich then quickly made the relay throw to shortstop Dylan Myster to tag Palacios out at third base and end the inning.

Isidro Lizama threw four innings in relief, allowing one earned run on five hits with seven strikeouts and no walks

for the Cubs.

Albert Adriano lasted for two innings, giving up two hits—including an RBI triple to Josh Deleon Guerrero in a four-run second inning by McDonald's. He also had four strikeouts with no walks.

MINORS

NSA Braves 3, Cubs 2

Javen Camacho had 11 strikeouts to help the Braves escape past the Cubs in the first ever Minors division game. He limited the Cubs to two hits with one earned run and two walks.

With the score tied at 1-1, Braves catcher Maximo Taitano singled after Ayden Ma-

gofna struck out leading off for the NSA-sponsored crew. Taitano scored on a botched play by the Cubs to push the Braves ahead, while Javen Camacho, who also singled, reached on another error.

Rosie Saralu ended the top of the sixth by retiring Jacob Babauta and Kindu Pua. Saralu, at the bottom of the sixth with one out, walked and later reached home plate to move the Cubs within one.

Robert Manglona struck out, while Abraham Saralu walked to put another runner on base. Abraham Saralu, however, was left stranded after Camacho retired Joseph Lizama to end the game.

M-LEAGUE

From Page 28

ver Lee teamed up in powering KFAS past Shirley's as each made a hat trick. Lee posted all his three goals in the first half to hand KFAS a 6-2 advantage. Edwin Kim added two goals, while Juan Oh tallied one in the opening half.

Hwapyoung then picked up where Lee left off, recording three of KFAS' last four goals in the second half. Jun Woo Lee also hit the board in the final 45 minutes of play, while Oh got his second in the second frame, too.

PIC 4, U16 WNT 4

In the second game, the U16 Women's National Team spoiled Pacific Islands Club's debut in the league after forcing a draw.

Emma Suemasu made back-to-back goals for the U16 WNT, including the equalizer in the 62nd minute. Her first goals was registered in the 56th minute, while Janelle Chognaki also had a brace after lighting up the board in the 22nd and 26th.

Chognaki's pair came after PIC established an early 2-0 advantage, courtesy of Albert Bergancia's conversion in the third and seventh minute. Ezekiel Canape then put PIC on top anew, 3-2, midway in the second half, but Suemasu tied the match again in the 56th.

FAKE

From Page 28

around with Betde United's defense to lift Fake Madrid to the easy win. Betde United drew its two goals in the second half from Taka Borja.

Meanwhile, in the co-ed U18 division finals, Bruv edged out CTSI Petmalu, 4-2.

Bruv was also undefeated coming into the title match, making the team highly favored against CTSI Petmalu, which finished third after the elimination and had to pull off an upset against the second-ranked Suplex City to advance to the finals.

The underdog CTSI Petmalu then caught Bruv off guard early in the championship game when Mia Carreon scored. However, CTSI Petmalu failed to keep the shaky lead when John Michael Rojas answered

Two minutes later, PIC regained the upper hand, thanks to Bergancia's third goal, however Suemasu countered for another deadlock, which was not broken in the remaining minutes of the close match.

Matansa 1, Sun Palace 1

The third game in the division also ended in a draw with Matansa's Amzad Khan saving the day for his team.

Amzad delivered the game-tying goal in the 50th minute. Earlier in the 20th minute, Daniel Mar Pablo hit his target to put Sun Palace on the board.

late in the first half, which ended in a tie as both teams hung tough on defense.

Then in the second half, CTSI Petmalu goalie Ronnel Ocanada gambled on moving away from his post to pick up the ball, but James Ermitanio was quicker and kicked it in just before the former caught it.

Down by only one, CTSI Petmalu stayed in the match and continued to attack, hoping Bruv to commit a mistake on defense. Bruv did, as John Bucayo opted to chase the ball and leave his post, allowing Joshua De Leon to move in for the equalizer.

However, that was CTSI Petmalu's last goal, while Eun Syu Hahn broke the deadlock with a cross in between two defenders and Gillian Villagomez also hit the board in the closing seconds of the finals to hand Bruv the title win.

2018 SSS Youth Futsal Tournament Co-ed U12 Finals

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Tinsel Toes coach Catherine Toves huddles with her players during a timeout in their co-ed U12 title game against Betde in Saipan Soccer School's 2018 Youth Futsal Tournament last Friday night at the TSL Sports Complex.



Betde's Mark Chavez, left, steps in to pick up the ball and prevent Tinsel Toes' Sean Gil from kicking it, while the former's sister Kaithlynn stays close in the play.



The ball rolls past Tinsel Toes' Sophia Quintos, left, and Betde's Wataru Kadokura.



Betde's Mark Roque, left, battles Tinsel Toes' Becky Ha for possession.



Betde's Kaithlynn Chavez is left open to dribble during the second half of the title game.



Tinsel Toes' Sean Gil, left, tries to dribble away from the defense of Betde's Kaithlynn Chavez.



Tinsel Toes' Becky Ha tries, left, to keep the ball away from Betde's Mark Roque.



Tinsel Toes' Vicente Reyes deflects the ball.



Neymar injured ahead of PSG-Real Madrid duel

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Saipan Tribune Sports



Spurs snap 4-game losing skid, down Cavaliers

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28 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Bank of Saipan edges Comets

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Jesse Stole pitched two plus innings in relief, while Jacob Wesley and Greg Perez delivered at the plate to lift Bank of Saipan past Comets, 6-5, in last Sunday's game in the 2018 Saipan Little League Baseball's Majors division at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.



Stole pitched a one-hit game with no earned runs. He also struck out nine and walked seven before he was replaced by Ezra Ada when Petty Mendiola was about to bat at the bottom of the sixth.

Holding on to a slim two-run lead at the bottom of the sixth, Stole gave Bank of Saipan some anxious moments after giving up consecutive walks to Sonny Aldan and James Lifofoi. Aldan led off for the Comets then scored on a Stole wild pitch.



JON PEREZ
McDonald's pitcher Dylan Santos throws to the plate against the Cubs in their Majors division game in the 2018 Saipan Little League Baseball last Sunday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Stole then retired Sonny Pangelinan and again walked Anton Indalencio, putting runners at the corners. Ada came

in to replace Stole and immediately walked Mendiola to load up the bases. But Ada settled in after that and struck out

Tobit Cruz and Norech Kachoi to end the game.

See BANK on Page 26

Lopsided wins in M-League opening week

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Three teams waltzed past their respective opponents

in Division A to start their campaign in the 2018 spring season of the M-League on high gear.

Fall season champion TanHoldings Football Club set the tone in Week 1 of the triple-header in the division following its 7-1 victory over the Teen Ayuyus in the first game last Sunday at the Hopwood Middle School Field. Then in the second match, Paire Football Club shut down Okadaya, 4-0, while in the third tiff, MP United Football Club clobbered Kanoa Football Club, 12-0.

MP United had the win in the bag right at the end of the first half as it built an 8-0 advantage behind the five goals of Sunjoon Tenorio. Jonathan Capayas chipped in two, while the returning Timothy Tawanpiy added one for MP United in the first half.

Then in the second half, Tenorio showed no mercy, as he knocked in all of his team's four goals in the final 45 minutes of play to lead

MP United's rout of the hapless Kanoa crew.

In the first game, TanHoldings won its early faceoff against the team it defeated during the 2017 fall season finale.

Martin Jambor starred in TanHoldings' easy victory over the Teen Ayuyus after firing four goals. Sean Perez, Jershwin Angeles, and Ryan Relucio contributed one apiece, while the Teen Ayuyus' lone goal came from Rintaro Miyawaki.

In the second game, Daniel Agulto lifted Paire past Okadaya after drilling a pair of goals. He got his first in the 21st minute and the second in the 33rd. Paire had an own goal in the first half off Okadaya's miscue, while Dai Podziewski delivered the team's other goal in the second half when he scored in the 84th minute.

DIVISION B KFAS 11, Shirley's 4

Over at the Koblerville Elementary School Field, Korean Football Association on Saipan hammered Shirley's Football Club.

Hwapyoung Kim and Oli

See M-LEAGUE on Page 26

Fake Madrid, Bruv deliver in finale



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Top-ranked Fake Madrid and Bruv did not disappoint as they prevailed in their respective title matches in Saipan Soccer School's 2018 Youth Futsal Tournament last Friday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

Fake Madrid, which entered last weekend's finale unbeaten, kept its unblemished re-



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Bruv's John Michael Rojas, left, is up against the defense of CTSI Petmalu's Mia Carreon, center, and Britanny Wally during their co-ed U18 title game in Saipan Soccer School's 2018 Youth Futsal Tournament last Friday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

cord following an 8-3 triumph over Betde United in their co-ed U15 championship game.

Kaden Church towed Fake Madrid to the title victory, as he made more goals than the combined output of Betde United. Church was on target in the second half, firing four goals to bring his total to five.

Before Church's explosion, Rintaro Miyawaki started things off for Fake Madrid as the latter knocked in a pair of goals. Katrina Costales added one for Fake Madrid's 4-1 halftime edge. Brandon Tenorio registered the lone goal for Betde United in the first half.

Then in the second half, Church showed up and toyed

See FAKE on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kanoa Football Club's Rodwealth Espana uses his body to deflect the ball, while MP United FC's Josh Abragan defends during the second half of their Division A game in the M-League last Sunday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.